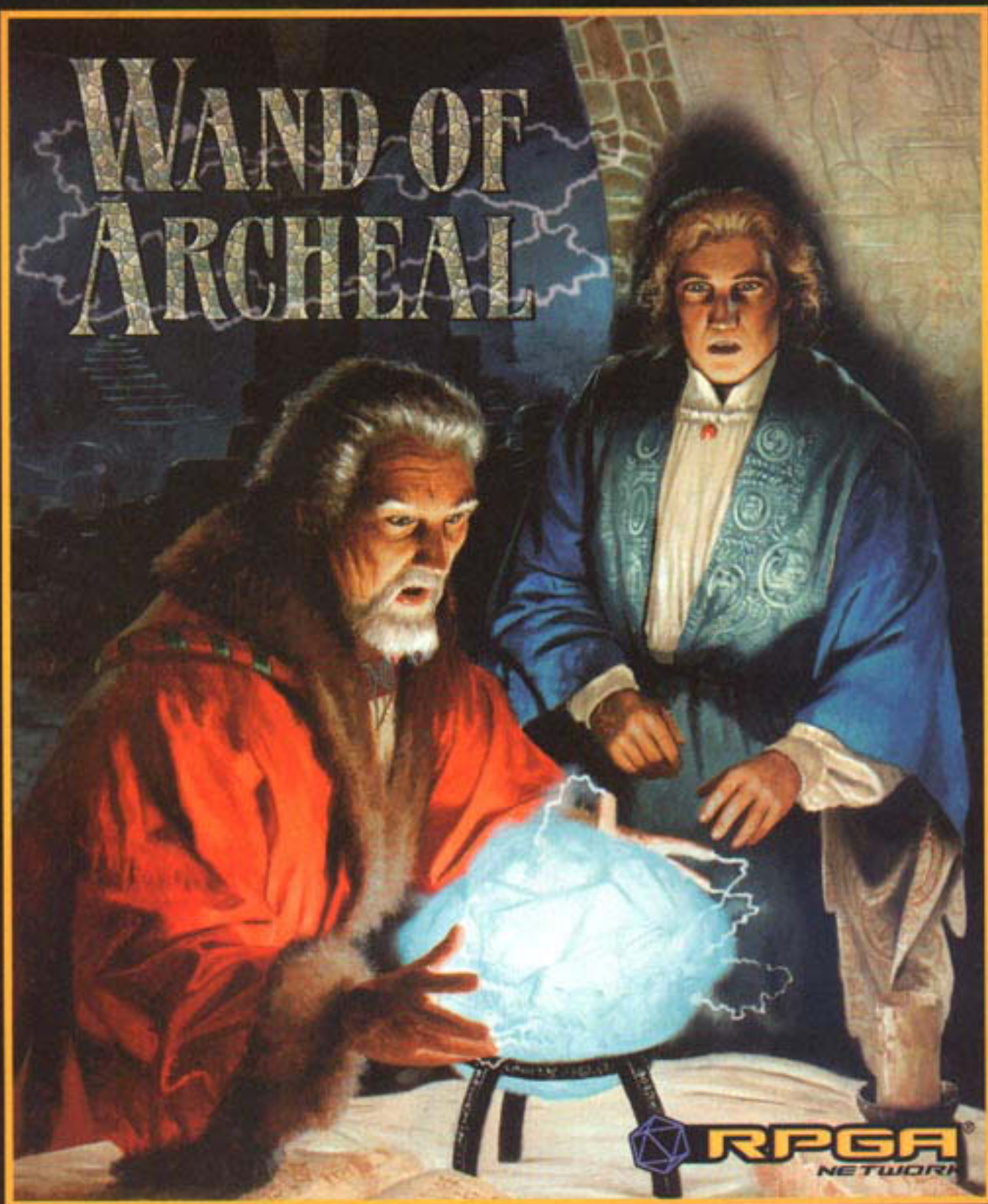




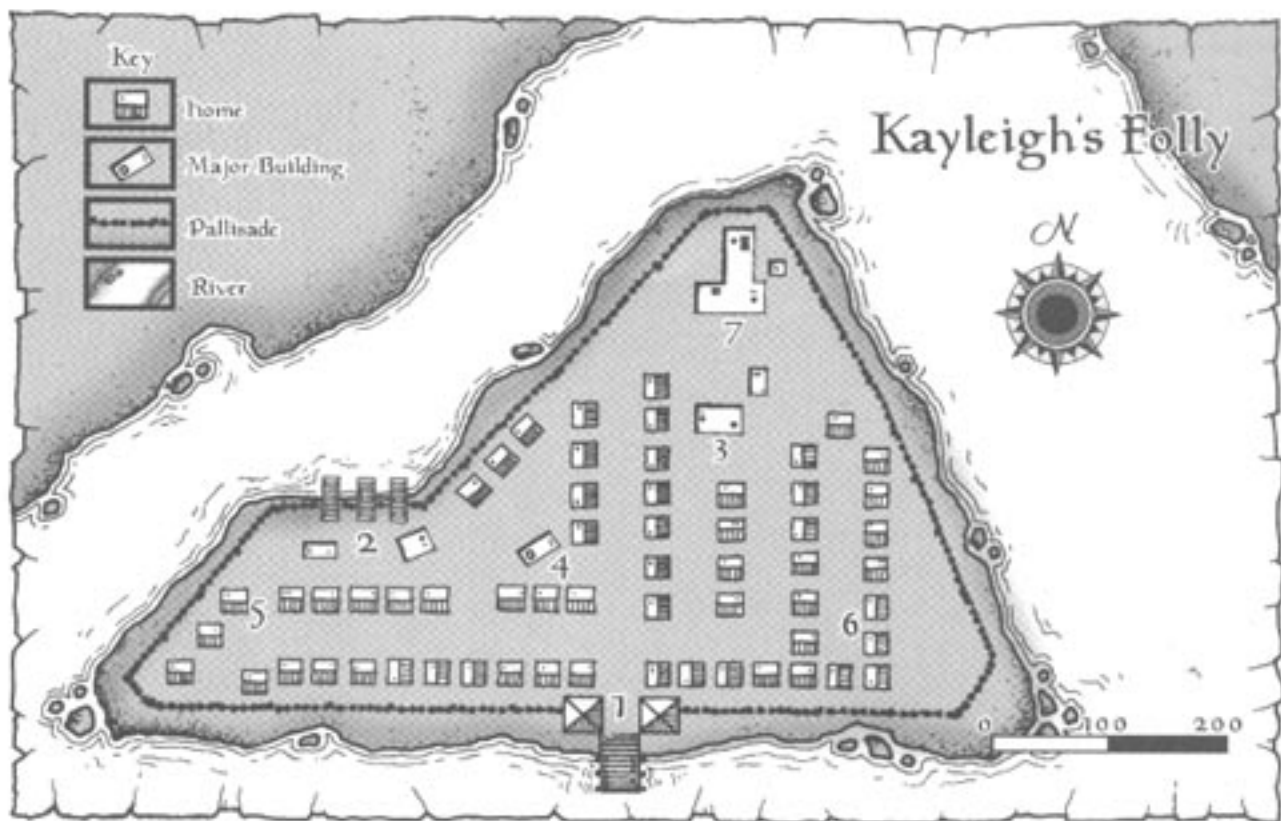
Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

Adventure

WAND OF ARCHEAL



Mike Selinker and Penny Williams



Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

WAND OF ARCHEAL

An AD&D® Adventure for character levels 6–8 exclusively for RPGA® Network Guild-level™ Members (1999)

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The Wand of Archeal was developed for use in the RPGA@ Network's tournament program in 1988 and was very well received. The Network staff now presents a revised and updated version of this work for your use at home. We hope this adventure brings you as much enjoyment in your home campaign as it did in tournament play.

The isolated location of this adventure allows you to use it as is in your campaign if the PCs are exploring a part of your world as yet unknown to them. With a little modification, you can also integrate it into an active part of your world. The two factions of wizards may be any groups of professional magic-using rivals, so long as some event brings their conflict to military proportions.

This is an adventure for six to eight player characters of 6th-8th level.

Grayisle Background

A century ago, six powerful wizards sought out the remote island continent of Grayisle, intending to found a school of magic there and further their craft in peace. Grayisle's royal family and nobility welcomed the magicians, who promised protection to the land in exchange for the freedom to work undisturbed (and untaxed). Under this arrangement, both the School of the Celestial Arts and the populace prospered, living in peaceful coexistence for several decades.

Forty years ago, however, everything changed. Erasmus, one of the founding wizards, died in an accident while trying to construct an artifact that would give physical form to the user's thoughts. The so-called Star Crown would have consisted (primarily) of a heavy platinum crown that had belonged to a faerie king set with a huge star sapphire reputedly taken from the heart of a real star that had fallen to earth.

While Erasmus's colleagues met to decide who would carry on his life's work, his two assistants, Gambrillon and Miliara, each stole a component of their master's experiment—the crown and the star sapphire. The two younger mages both had their own followings within the School, and their departure resulted in a schism that divided the wizards into two groups—the Celestial Order that Gambrillon founded and the Mages of the Red Cabal, which consisted of Miliara's followers. These two cartels, evenly matched in power and resources, have been waging a magical cold war ever since, even though their founders died some years ago. Neither cartel is predominantly devoted to good, evil, law, or chaos; both are solely dedicated to achieving magical supremacy through completing the artifact.

Since the schism, the rulers of Grayisle have been keeping a wary eye on both groups, for each now seems far more interested in defeating the other than in serving the country. Fortunately, neither group is terribly large, and the rivalry has consisted primarily of intrigue, with each side attempting to infiltrate the other and gain the missing piece of the artifact. Therefore, collateral damage from destructive magic has been minimal. For the most part, Grayisle's inhabitants have remained more concerned with their own lives than with disagreements over things they could not understand.

Recent events, however, have shifted the arcane cold war into full-blown armed conflict and drawn some of the citizenry into the struggle.

Archeal and His Wand

Archeal is a 15th-level Celestial Order wizard who presently has no body, Poisoned by the Cabal member Venon's fatal darts, Archeal died at the Battle of Fort Hope. Because of a contingency spell he had previously cast in conjunction with a *magic jar*, however, his consciousness entered the gem at the tip of his *rod of rulership*. The Cabal wizard Barillus removed the *rod* from the scene of battle, but Archeal was unable to seize his enemy's body because of the latter's *amulet of life protection*.

When this adventure begins, the rod-along with Archeal's mind—is in a cave deep within Mount Antloch. Archeal has managed to possess passing guards for brief periods—just long enough to determine where he is and gather some information on the enemy's forces. This has caused some consternation within the Cabal complex, but no one has guessed the truth. Archeal is loath to leave the enemy fortress without his wand, and he believes he owes it to the Order to discover the exact whereabouts of Miliara's Star, which is reputed to be here as well. These concerns plus his precarious current existence have convinced him that rescue must come from outside, so he awaits the arrival of Order troops or spies as patiently as possible.

In his normal form, Archeal has a stern face and a gray beard. A strict disciplinarian with four decades of magical experience, he is unlikely to accept suggestions from those of lesser rank. He displays a condescending attitude when dealing with beings he considers beneath him. Archeal has no compunctions about reading the mind of anyone in his presence with his *helm of telepathy*, and he occasionally uses its *suggestion* ability to get his way, although he never does this with people he respects. Archeal is a brilliant tactician, which explains why he commands most of the Order's important military maneuvers.

The Wand of Archeal is really a *rod of rulership*. Slightly larger than the standard rod, it is a 3-foot-long, ivory shaft carved with a high-relief pattern of crowns and swords. The 40-karat diamond set in its tip raises its pure jewelry value to 35,000 gp. The *rod* glows faintly when *in use*, either as a *rod of rulership* or as Archeal's *magic jar*.

Ever since Archeal found the *rod*, he has referred to it as his wand. Whether this is to confuse those who would speculate about its powers or just a matter of personal preference, no one save Archeal himself knows. Nevertheless, everyone now refers to it as the Wand of Archeal.

Archeal, male human M15: AC 2 (bracers of defense AC 2); MV 12; hp 45; THACO 16; #AT 1 (staff); Dmg 1d6+2; SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); Str 14, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 17, Cha 16; AL LN; XP Nil.

Special Equipment: cloak of eluenskap, helm of telepathy, rod of rulership (34 charges).

Spells Memorized* (5/5/5/5/2/1): 1st-detect magic, light, magic missile (x2), protection from evil; 2nd-bind, detect evil, levitate; 3rd-clairvoyance, phantasmal force; 4th-charm monster, polymorph self, remove curse; 5th-cone of cold, hold monster, passwall, sending, teleport; 6th-geas, project image; 7th-teleport without error.

*List indicates spells remaining in Archeal's memory at the time he entered his magic jar.

Escalation of the Conflict

Grayisle is now a realm caught up in a whirlwind of magical and military strife. The Celestial Order recently discovered that the enchantments Erasmus had fixed into the platinum crown were slowly degrading its material form. The same thing was happening to the star sapphire in the hands of the Red Cabal. Hastily conducted research revealed that the enchantments intended to bring physical form to mere thoughts were having the opposite effect on the artifact's components because of the long delay in joining them. It had become imperative that the crown and the sapphire be joined as soon as possible, before both faded to mere memories.

Now engaged in a life-and-death struggle, the two magical cartels have devoted all their resources to warfare. Each has hired mercenary troops from the local populace, sparing neither magical nor monetary enticements. In fact, fighting for one of the cartels has become the highest-paying work in Grayisle, and by far the most hazardous. Even a few career military officers from Grayisle's army have succumbed to the lure of generous pay and resigned their commissions for high-placed positions in the new cartel armies. The wizards, most of them unaccustomed to true warfare, now find themselves supporting military operations on battlefields in the hinterlands of Grayisle.

The war has thus far involved few of the side effects usually associated with wider-ranging conflicts, however. Since the wizards' troops lack for nothing and are fighting on their native soil, they have no reason to disturb villages and the peasantry. Therefore, Grayisle has thus far lost little in the way of crops or human life.

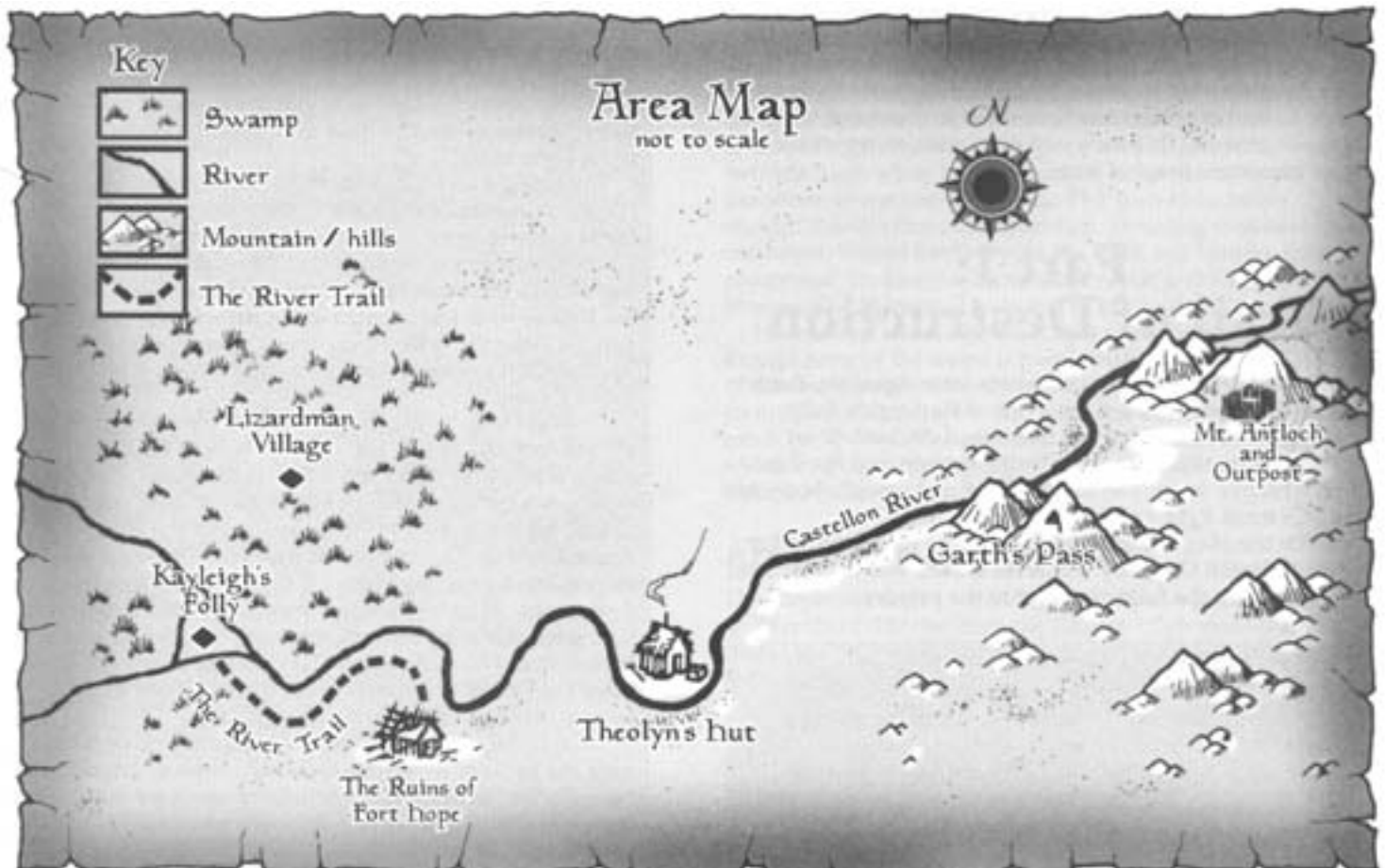
At this juncture, both sides are evenly matched, but the Mages of the Red Cabal have just dealt the Celestial Order forces a blow that may bring the war one step closer to resolution.

The Wizard War

When the Wizard War, as the locals call it, first broke out, the Celestial Order immediately converted one of its towers, located on the Castellon River, into a small fortress. Fort Hope, as it came to be known, received considerable support from the Order in the form of troops and supplies, for it was positioned at a key strategic point along the river. Recently, judicious scrying has indicated that the Cabal also maintains an outpost in this area, somewhere within nearby Mount Antloch, though this intelligence has not yet yielded its exact location. Here, the Order suspected, rested the star sapphire of Miliara.

The Order dispatched Archeal, one of its highest-ranking wizards, to Fort Hope to provide magical support for a raid on Mount Antloch. But the Cabal had already learned of this plan from spies, and its leaders decided to make a preemptive strike. While the Celestial Order was consulting with its military experts to plan the attack, the Cabal leaders were recruiting hundreds of lizardmen from the nearby swamps to serve as infantry and training them to approach a target under the cover of invisibility.

Shortly after Archeal teleported into Fort Hope, the new Cabal forces approached the fortress under the cover of a *mass invisibility* spell, then launched a surprise attack. Though the Celestial Order's forces were unprepared for the assault, Archeal's spells and his *rod of rulership* helped



the defenders hold back the oncoming forces—at least initially. In fact, the Fort Hope troops and their powerful ally could easily have repelled the invaders had it not been for a small commando force sent to eliminate Archeal himself. The Cabal wizard Barillus, the mage/thief Venon, and two human officers teleported invisibly into the fort, made their way to Archeal's position, and attacked him by surprise. Barillus's *wand of negation* prevented the Order wizard from using his magic, and Venon's poisoned darts eventually slew the brave Archeal. Without him, Fort Hope eventually fell, and the victorious lizardmen took the few surviving defenders prisoner.

Unbeknownst to the Cabal forces, however, Archeal had foreseen the dangers of participating in armed conflicts when the Wizard War began and had taken special precautions. Casting a *contingency* spell in conjunction with a *magic jar*, he arranged to transfer himself into the gem at the top of his *rod of rulership* if his body should die. From there, he reasoned, he would have a fighting chance of surviving the battle, recovering and restoring his body, and living to fight another day.

So when Archeal's body died under the ram of poisoned darts, his essence entered the rod, causing it to glow softly. Barillus, ever cautious about possible traps on enemies' magic items, used *telekinesis* to place the wand and Archeal's other magic items into a specially prepared lead box. Then he and Venon teleported back to the Mount Antloch outpost.

In the meantime, the sudden lack of communication from Fort Hope alarmed the Celestial Order. They had expected word from Archeal following his inspection of the troops there, but none came. So the Order wizards scanned Fort Hope with crystal balls and beheld the destruction. An emergency strategy session ruled out the option of sending an army against Mount Antloch, for the wizards consider the safety of Archeal to be of paramount importance. Thus, they have decided to send a small raiding party to Fort Hope to find out what has become of Archeal and to return him—or at worst, his body—to the Order, along with his most important magical item.

Part 1: Trail of Destruction

In this section, the player characters investigate the Battle of Fort Hope and the nearby town of Kayleigh's Folly, seeking clues as to what has become of Archeal. Their search eventually leads them to the swamp and the lizardmen who live there. The lizard king has Archeal's body, but the PCs must fight and kill him to obtain it.

Once the player characters have come into the employ of the Celestial Order by whatever means you choose, read or paraphrase the following text to the players:

"Archeal has been lost," announces Ezakion, one of the Celestial Order's middle-ranking mages, as you file into the audience chamber. Minutes ago, one of the younger mages shook each of you awake and announced that the Order had a mission for you. Given the war in progress, it's a reasonable bet that it involves the rival order of wizards known as the Mages of the Red Cabal.

For decades now, these two magical cartels have maintained a bitter rivalry bordering on a cold war. At one time there was only one magical order here on the continent of Grayisle, but an argument over construction of an artifact resulted in a schism, with each of the two resulting groups holding one component of the so-called Star Crown. The Celestial Order had Gambrillon's faerie crown, while the Red Cabal held Miliara's star sapphire. Each group has engaged in considerable intrigue and behind-the-scenes maneuvering in hopes of regaining the other's piece of the artifact and completing its construction. Recently, however, the two groups discovered that the long delay in joining the pieces is causing them both to degrade. This information has elevated the conflict to military levels. Both cartels have hired mercenary soldiers and specialists, and open warfare is the order of the day. At present, the mages supply Grayisle's citizens with the most lucrative and dangerous work. But though the mages often lend their magical might to skirmishes, it is almost unheard of for one of them to fall in battle. Yet this is what Ezakion is saying, and you know it bodes ill.

"Sit down, all of you," he says. "As you know, when the war broke out, we converted one of our towers—the one on the Castellon River—into a fortress known as Fort Hope. Besides its strategic importance in controlling river traffic, it was the closest outpost we had to the Red Cabal's hidden base in Mount Antloch, where we suspect that Miliara's Star is kept. Our spies within the Cabal told us that because of Fort Hope's presence, the enemies were planning to abandon Antloch. To prevent them from moving the Star, we planned to launch an attack on the mountain from Fort Hope, even though we had not yet pinpointed the hidden entrance to the Cabal's complex. We sent Archeal, one of our finest mages, to the fort to direct strategy. It was to have been a short visit—he planned only to consult with the commander of our forces, then return before the attack on Antloch began. We expected a telepathic message from him after his inspection of the fort, but it never came."

Indicating a crystal ball on the table, he continues. "Scrying provided the answer to the mystery: Fort Hope lay in ruins—burned to the ground. A few lizardmen, whom we assume to be hirelings of the Cabal, were picking through the wreckage. Unfortunately, we could discern but little of what had brought about the tragedy. What is curious, however, is that there seems to be no sign of Archeal—alive or dead—in the carnage. This is why I have called for you.

"You are to go to Fort Hope and look for any sign of the wizard Archeal. As you know, he is a man in his late fifties, with a gray beard and a dark complexion. He typically wears the robes of our Order, adorned with celestial bodies. Most importantly, he always carries the Wand of Archeal, one of our most potent weapons. The wand is responsible for routing many a Cabal army through its devastating ability to dominate foes. Even if the Cabal has succeeded in slaying Archeal, we must have the wand back to maintain our strength. It is unlikely that any Cabal mage can divine how to use it, but it could mean the difference between victory and defeat for us.

"The Cabal is probably keeping any prisoners or booty from the Battle of Fort Hope in its hidden Mount Antloch base. We fear for Archeal's safety if we attack the mountain with an army, as we had originally planned. Thus, we

have decided to send a small group to search for and recapture Archeal and his wand. That's where you come in. Obviously, you must first go to Fort Hope and search for clues. If you can recover survivors from the devastation of Fort Hope, by all means do so. If your search calls for infiltrating Mount Antloch, you must find the rumored secret passage into the Cabal's complex there to enter unnoticed. The Mount Antloch station is well-guarded, and it is unlikely that a frontal attack would succeed. Stealth is of the utmost importance—a direct assault could be deadly for you and Archeal. So, please, be careful. The Cabal mages have a reputation for making potions from the bones of their captives.

“Unless you have any questions, you can gather your things and travel at once to the town of Kayleigh's Folly, near Fort Hope. I will send Jamal, one of our younger mages, along with you as far as the town. He will wait there for you until you have finished investigating the ruins of the fort, then inform us telepathically of what you have found. If necessary, he can arrange to transport items back here, should you need to continue onward to Mount Antloch. Are you prepared?”

Ezakion, a gray-bearded wizard, will answer the party's questions to the best of his ability. His knowledge of the recent events, however, is limited. Ezakion can supply the following pieces of information, if asked.

- The Order had stationed approximately one hundred soldiers at Fort Hope. Only a few of them were very experienced, but many were talented archers. With Archeal's help, they should have been able to repulse a Cabal attack.
- Archeal's *rod of rulership* has value both as a magic item and as a piece of jewelry. It is a 3-foot-long carved ivory shaft set with a huge diamond at its tip. Ezakion does not know the *rod's* command word.
- The nearby human settlement called Kayleigh's Folly is not allied with the Cabal or the Order. It caters primarily to travelers and merchants, but its residents did trade freely with Fort Hope.
- * The mayor of Kayleigh's Folly is a diplomat of sorts who is famous for forging a trade treaty with lizardmen in the area.

If the PCs ask Ezakion for equipment, he tells them that the Order has no extra gear available—they must rely on what they have. Ezakion emphasizes the need for the characters to act quickly and gives them only minimal time to ready themselves before beginning their mission. When they are prepared, he introduces them to Jamal, a thin, studious-looking young mage, and provides the group with horses for the trip to Kayleigh's Folly (see “On the Road”).

Ezakion, male human M13: AC 5 (*cloak of protection* +4, Dex bonus +1); MV 12; hp 37; THACO 16; #AT 1 (staff); Dmg 1d6; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML elite (14); Str 13, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 17; AL LN; XP Nil.

Special Equipment: brooch of shielding, cloak of protection, periapt of proof against poison +3, potion of extra-healing, ring of warmth,

Spells Memorized (5/5/5/4/4/2): 1st—charm person, comprehend languages, feather fall, hold portal, magic missile; 2nd—detect evil, ESP, forget, know alignment, strength; 3rd—clairaudience, clairvoyance, dispel magic, fireball, invisibility 10' radius; 4th—charm monster, fire shield, ice storm, magic mirror; 5th—cone of cold, contact other plane, sending, wall of stone; 6th—geas, globe of invulnerability.

On the Road

The two-day trip from the Celestial Order's main citadel to Kayleigh's Folly is uneventful. The PCs can use the time to plan strategy and to become acquainted with Jamal. The young mage is short and slim, but wiry. He has blond hair and dark eyes, but his skin is pale, as is the case with many of the younger students of magic in the Citadel. He is not particularly talkative or curious, but responds freely to questions about himself.

Jamal began studying magic about two years ago. He has done some adventuring in the local area since the war began, participating in several scouting parties, but he does not know the terrain particularly well. The loss of Archeal concerns him greatly, for the older mage was his mentor at the Citadel. Though he requested a part in this assignment, he is unwilling to accompany the PCs any farther than town. He will wait for them at the Drowned Muskrat Inn, where he will pose as the son of a nearby farmer. Ezakion will contact him each night at a preappointed time via *sending* for reports.

Jamal, male human M3: AC 10; MV 12; hp 11; THACO 20 (19 with dagger +1); #AT 1 (*dagger* +1) or 3 (darts); Dmg 1d4 +1 on 1d3/1d3/1d3; SZ M (5'2" tall); ML elite (14); Str 8, Dex 7, Con 9, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 12; AL NG; XP Nil.

Special Equipment: cloak of invisibility.

Spells Memorized (2/1): N-charm person, magic missile; 2nd—knock,

Kayleigh's Folly

The small, walled town known as Kayleigh's Folly is home to 138 human residents (sixty-two adults and seventy-six children) who cater to travelers and merchants. The people of the settlement are happy to trade with any who come in peace, but they stop short of offering support to any political or magical faction.

Kayleigh's Folly was named for its founder, whom people thought mad to establish a trading post so far from the protection of a major city. But Kayleigh proved all his critics wrong two years ago when he established a trade pact with the lizardmen in the nearby swamp. This proved lucrative enough that the tiny post flourished, attracting merchants and craftsmen. Within the first year, the town had become quite prosperous. Its founder became its mayor, and Kayleigh still likes to offer a personal welcome to any visitors.

Homes and stores line the streets of Kayleigh's Folly, though none of the shops is particularly well stocked. Most of the residents are friendly to travelers, but a trifle skittish about lizardmen, despite the treaty that has brought them so much prosperity. (The residents just don't trust bipeds with scales, even though Kayleigh frequently assures them that there is no danger.)

Arrival in Kayleigh's Folly

The characters arrive at Kayleigh's Folly about midmorning on their third day out from the Citadel. High stone walls surround the little town, which is situated on an island at a fork in the Castellon River. Small rowboats (four-person capacity) line the bank, offering to take travelers into town for 1 sp each. If the PCs hire one, they arrive safely at the town's main gate. Those who choose to swim also arrive safely, but wet. Jamal takes a ferryboat to town, warning the PCs that wet travelers have to pay a premium fee for entrance.

The fee for entry at the gate is a flat 5 sp, or 7 sp for those who arrive wet. (The town gets a cut of the ferryboat fees in

taxes, so officials tend to frown upon those who try to avoid taking the boats.) Four guards stand watch at the gate and collect money, dropping it into a slot in the top of a heavy metal box, which is anchored to the ground. Ten more guards man the towers that flank the entrance. Visitors may leave the town and re-enter the same day without paying a second fee; those wishing to do so must request a special token from the gate guards before departure. Anyone trying to climb over the town wall becomes a target for bowfire from all ten tower guards.

Jamal pays his entrance fee and recommends that his companions do the same. Go to "A Charm by Any Other Name..." when all the characters have entered the town.

Gate Guards, male and female humans F2 (14): AC 4 (chain mail + shield); MV 6 (encumbered); hp 17 each; THACO 19; #AT 1 (short sword) or 2 (longbow); Dmg 1d6 or 1d6/1d6; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (12); Int average (9); AL LN; XP Nil.

Special Equipment: flight arrows (quiver of 10), longbow, short sword.

A Charm by Any Other Name.. .

As soon as the PCs enter the city, Jamal spots an old acquaintance of his—Mother Lazaar, the local witch who professes to know jujū magic. Jamal purchased a potion from her on his last trip to town and nearly died from ingesting it. (It was a bottle of foul-smelling liquid that she claimed would repel swamp creatures, but it only made Jamal violently ill.)

Mother Lazaar is standing in the street conversing with a traveler, showing him a silver medallion. As soon as Jamal sees her, he leaves the party and approaches her at a run. Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The sun shines brightly overhead, and the citizens of Kayleigh's Folly go cheerfully about their business. Travelers, farmers, and street vendors move about the main avenue of the town, and shopkeepers hawk their wares from doorways. Ahead of you and a bit to your left, an old, snaggletoothed woman barbers with a traveler for a silver medallion. "It'll save your life in the swamps," she avows, a mercenary gleam in her eyes. "You want to be flayed alive and eaten by those lizardmen?"

As the man ponders the medallion doubtfully, your companion Jamal bolts into the street, heading for the woman with fury in his dark eyes. "Charlatan!" he shouts, pointing at the old lady. "You know nothing of the ways of magic—all you know is how to cheat honest people!"

A crowd begins to gather as the woman steps back, assuming an expression of bewilderment. "Whatever do you mean, young sir?" she inquires in a quavering voice. "I don't think I know you. You must have mistaken me for someone else. I'm Mother Lazaar, known and respected throughout Kayleigh's Folly for the power of my charms against the swamp terrors."

"I'll teach you to give mages a bad name!" shouts Jamal, raising his hand as though to cast a spell. The sound of armored footsteps behind you indicates that the gate guards have noted the disturbance. "Stop!" shouts a commanding voice from farther down the street. "I'll brook no disturbances in my town!" A rotund man with a handlebar mustache bustles down the street, favoring his right leg slightly. From the deference everyone shows him, it is obvious that he is someone with authority.

The voice comes from Mayor Kayleigh. The mayor has just emerged from the Drowned Muskrat Inn, where he was relaxing over a drink when he heard the ruckus.

If the PCs take no action to prevent it, their companion casts *magic missile* at the old woman. This action earns Jamal a night in jail and a fine. Mother Lazaar survives the experience, however, shrieking at full volume until her assistants, Caleb and Joseph (see "Doing Business in Kayleigh's Folly: Area 5"), arrive to take her home. If the characters restrain Jamal in any way, he does not cast his spell, and the altercation dies down to a shouting match.

Unless the PCs actually participated in an attack on Mother Lazaar, the authorities neither fine nor jail them, even if Jamal succeeded in harming the old woman. If the rest of the group did attack Mother Lazaar, ten guards (two from the gate and eight from the towers) try to take the party into custody. Those who surrender are sentenced (by the mayor, on the spot) to pay a fine of 1 gp each and spend one night in jail. If they pay the fines and serve their time, they are released in the morning with no repercussions. Party members who fight their way out of town, however, can gain no cooperation from anyone in Kayleigh's Folly from this point onward.

Mother Lazaar is in fact a charlatan, and everything Jamal said about her was true. (See "Doing Business in Kayleigh's Folly: Area 5" for details about her and her companions.) From here, go to "The Mayor."

The Mayor

Assuming the PCs do not alienate the mayor and townsfolk with armed conflict in the streets, Kayleigh invites



them into the Drowned Muskrat for a drink. A fifty-year-old retired fighter, the mayor is a roly-poly man with a thick handlebar mustache and a hearty laugh, Read or paraphrase the following text to the players if they join the mayor for a drink:

“Gerrold!” barks the plump man you now know as Mayor Kayleigh, as he leads you into the Drowned Muskrat Inn, the town’s only tavern. “A round of drinks on me, for our visitors!” A dour-faced, taciturn man behind the bar nods and busies himself preparing drinks. “Welcome to Kayleigh’s Folly!” crows your rotund host, wincing slightly as he sits down at a table with an unfinished ale on it. “I’m Mayor Kayleigh. Pardon my creaky old bones; the ‘gator that ended my adventuring career left me a game leg to remember him by. I used to be quite the fighter in my day though. And I still enjoy that fancy alligator-skin sheath I had made for my longsword when I got back from the swamps.”

“But enough about me. Why don’t you tell me a bit about yourselves?”

Mayor Kayleigh is both a good talker and a good listener. Though he’s happy to recount his own adventures in great detail if the PCs ask, he is also interested in theirs. Tales of the Wizard War earn the characters another round of free drinks, as well as questions regarding the fate of Fort Hope. (The townsfolk do not yet know of the disaster there, but they have had no visits from the soldiers for a couple of days and are beginning to wonder about it.) If told that Fort Hope has fallen, the mayor expresses sorrowful acceptance of the ways of warfare. Kayleigh shows surprise, however, if informed that the local lizardmen played any role in the tragedy there.

If asked, Kayleigh readily reveals the following information:

- “Them lizardmen have never harmed anyone from this town. They’ve been as good as their word about that.”
- “The lizardmen I negotiated that trade agreement with weren’t no pacifists, but they never would’ve mounted a raid on an armed fortification. Something must’ve changed their minds about humans and warfare.”
- * “I haven’t seen any lizardmen for several months—I’d just assumed that they didn’t need anything from my town for a while.”
- “I know where the lizardmen’s lair is, and I can tell you how to get there if you’re interested. It’s tough going through the swamp though.”
- “The swamps are full of snakes and alligators. If you’re heading in there, you’d best take some precautions first.”

Though he is too busy to accompany the PCs about town, Kayleigh happily tells them where to get whatever it is that they want. If the PCs have Regis along (see “The Boy Fisherman”), Kayleigh tells the lad that his parents have been worried sick about him and he should run home immediately. If the PCs need to purchase equipment or stay the night, go to “Doing Business in Kayleigh’s Folly.” If they have returned here from the swamps with Archeal’s body, go to “Delivering Archeal’s Body.”

Mayor Kayleigh, male human F3: AC 10; MV 9 (unencumbered, but limping due to old leg injury); hp 14; THACO 18; #AT 1 (longsword); Dmg 1d8; SZ M (5’8” tall); ML elite (14); Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 15; AL N; XP Nil.

Special Equipment: ring of mind shielding.

Doing Business in Kayleigh’s Folly

Though Kayleigh maintains that his post is fully honest, he tends to look the other way regarding any shady dealings unless the merchants’ behavior is likely to give his town a bad reputation. Honest businessmen charge nonresidents 150% of book price for any goods or services. The following encounter key corresponds to the locations marked on the “Kayleigh’s Folly” map.

If the PCs mention anything about lizardmen while talking to the locals, the townsfolk helpfully direct them to Mother Lazaar (see “Area 5”), the witch who sells “charms” to protect against lizardmen and other nasty reptiles.

When the player characters have finished their business in town, go to “The Road to the Fort” if they have not yet been there, or to “Part 2: The Mountain Passage” if they are ready to approach Mount Antloch.

1. The Front Gate. There are four guards on duty here at all times. They charge humans and demihumans a flat 5 sp per person for entry into Kayleigh’s Folly, or 7 sp if the person is wet (from swimming the river and thus avoiding the ferry-boat fee). They charge lizardmen 10 sp each unless Kayleigh is present.

Gate Guards, male and female humans F2 (14): AC 4 (chain mail + shield); MV 6 (encumbered); hp 17 each; THACO 19; #AT 1 (short sword) or 2 (longbow); Dmg 1d6 or 1d6/1d6; SZ M (6’ tall); ML steady (12); Int average (10); AL LN; XP Nil.
Special Equipment: longbow, short sword.

2. The Docks. Here the PCs can purchase boats of various types, including river barges, swamp boats, and small sailing vessels. A 20-foot-long river barge costs 50 gp, and a swamp boat costs 28 gp. But boat sales are secondary; repair work is the main occupation of those employed on the docks. Travelers can also hire pilots here at a rate of 3 sp per day for normal work. As soon as the PCs mention either swamps or lizardmen in describing the deal, however, the asking price skyrockets to at least 30 sp per day. Prices are triple the normal rates for night travel, but no barger will go into the actual lizardman lair, regardless of the pay offered. In addition to the fee, the PCs must agree to pay for any damage to a boat and understand that hired crew members will never fight or risk their lives for their employers.

If the player characters agree to all these special terms, they can hire Caplis, a strong, bearded barger who firmly believes in the ethic of hard work. He does not show fear, but he has a reputation for taking few risks with his passengers or his life. He wears a silver medallion that he believes will keep away hostile reptiles, courtesy of Mother Lazaar’s shop.

Caplis, male human F1: AC 10; MV 12 (unencumbered); hp 4; THACO 20; #AT 1 (dagger); Dmg 1d4; SZ M (6’ tall); ML steady (12); Str 16, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 8; AL LN; Xp Nil.
Special Equipment: bargepole.

3. The Drowned Muskrat Inn. The town’s only inn and tavern is not much more than a glorified log cabin. There are two small private rooms for rent (each costs 10 sp per night), plus a large common room, where guests can sleep in blankets on the floor in front of the fireplace for 3 sp per person per night. Meals cost 1 sp each and include a

sermon on the joys of good works from Debbot, the local 1st-level priest. Gerrold, a sour and taciturn man, owns the Drowned Muskrat and serves as both innkeeper and bartender. He is exceptionally unfriendly to lizardmen.

Jamal takes a room here to await word from the PCs. The Order will contact him via sending at a set time each evening.

4. The General Store. This large store specializes in supplies for boats, trappers, and fishermen. There are no weapons or armor for sale here, save for a few hunting knives and machetes. Prices are the standard 150% of book value, and the management frowns upon bargaining.

5. Mother Lazaar's Magic Shoppe. Mother Lazaar professes to be a 135-year-old witch, but she is really just an 80-year-old charlatan. She has decorated her home inside and out with idols, symbols, dolls, frightening pictures, and potions galore. Mother Lazaar says she is a mistress of juju magic - a lost art - and can make charms to protect one from all manner of foes, particularly those in the swamps.

Should the PCs consult her, she tries to sell them silver medallions that she says ward off hostile reptiles. Though she asks 50 gp for these, they do nothing. (They are real silver, however.) She also offers foul-smelling herb packages at 10 gp each to keep away swamp creatures, but they are really better at keeping friends away.

Several decades ago, Mother Lazaar apprenticed herself to a wizard long enough to learn how to cast *cantrip*. She has two burly, fiercely loyal bodyguards - the twin brothers Caleb and Jonah - who protect her from those who would steal her magic or remonstrate with her about its effectiveness.

Mother Lazaar, female human MI: AC 10; MV 12; hp 3; THACO 20; #AT 1 (staff); Dmg 1d6; SZ M (5' tall); ML average (10); Str 6, Dex 8, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 17; AL N; XI? Nil.

Special Equipment: flash powder, four herb packages, two silver medallions.

Spells Memorized (1): *cantrip*.

Caleb and Jonah, male humans F2 (2): AC 10; MV 12; hp 12 each; THACO 18 (Str bonus); #AT 1 (mace or dagger); Dmg 1d6+3 or 1d4+3; SZ M (6'2" tall); ML steady (12); Str 18/01, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL N; XP Nil.

6. Regis's House. The boy Regis (see "The Boy Fisherman") lives in this humble house with his aged father (who is very strict) and his young mother (who is very lax). When Regis comes home from his latest adventure at the fort, his father will punish him severely unless the PCs stand up for him.

7. Kayleigh's Home. The mayor's house is a well-appointed three-room cabin. He lives alone, with only the trophies from his adventuring days (including the head of a carrion crawler mounted above the fireplace) for company. He keeps a locked chest with 75 gp, 6 pp, and 50 sp under his bed. He also has a longsword, a longbow, and a polished suit of banded mail.

Mayor Kayleigh, male human F3: AC 10; MV 9 (unencumbered, but limping due to old leg injury); hp 14; THACO 18; #AT 1 (longsword); Dmg 1d8; SZ M (5'8" tall); ML elite (14); Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 15; AL N; XP Nil.

Special Equipment: banded mail (not worn), ring of mind shielding.

Delivering Archeal's Body

After the player characters have investigated the devastated fort and visited the lizardmen, they may wish to come back to Kayleigh's Folly to drop off the survivors from Fort Hope and deliver Archeal's body to Jamal. (They can take the body with them to the mountain if they have the means to transport it, but Jamal recommends against this if they discuss such a plan in his presence.) If the PCs do give the slain wizard's body to Jamal, he informs the Citadel about it that very night, and the Order wizards send out a special detail to retrieve their dead colleague. Jamal continues to wait in town in case the PCs need a contact there.

The survivors and their families are grateful to the characters for their rescue efforts. If the PCs have returned hostages safely, anything they need from now on in Kayleigh's Folly is at 100% of book value instead of the usual 150%.

Go to "Part 2: The Mountain Passage" from here.

The Road to the Fort

The locals do not visit Fort Hope often, but the soldiers dealt in town frequently. Therefore, the trail connecting the two sites is well-marked and well-traveled. It takes only three hours to get from town to the fort on horseback. Fort Hope is nestled among rolling hills along the banks of the River Castellon. Far to the east are gradually rising mountains (including Mount Antloch, which is the second-highest peak).

Scavengers

Read or paraphrase the following to the players when they get near the fort:

To the north is the Castellon River, a portion of which peeks through the two hills you have just traversed. A thin plume of smoke rises lazily from behind a hill, upon which stand a few nearly motionless figures. Beside them is a pole with what looks like a huge crossbow mounted atop it - pointed in your direction!

At the top of the 100-foot-tall hill before the PCs, nine lizardmen stand guard beside a makeshift ballista (actually an oversized crossbow swivel-mounted atop a pole) as their fellows ransack the remains of Fort Hope. The hilltop has plenty of trees, bushes, and rocky outcroppings to provide cover for both sides. Unless the player characters immediately take precautions to avoid detection (such as *invisibility*, use of cover, or just giving the hilltop a very wide berth), the sentries spot them and warn them (in Common) to stop, opening fire with the "ballista" and their own crossbows if the party does not obey. If the PCs do stop, they have three rounds to convince the lizardmen that they are not raiders sent by the Order or the sentries will attack anyway - this time with longswords. If the characters successfully sneak past the lizardmen, go to "Fort Hope." If they try to parley, see "Negotiations."

Negotiations

The player characters may try any strategy they wish to convince the lizardmen that they are not affiliated with the Celestial Order. Only one member of the sentry party

(Garrar) actually speaks Common very well, so he will speak for the lizardmen. If the characters attempt to negotiate, any of three possible gambits has a good chance of success:

- * The PCs can claim that they have come from Kayleigh's Folly to trade with the fort. Garrar knows about his people's non-aggression pact with the unallied humans in town and will not break treaty by attacking humans from there. However, he feigns an interest in trading with them on the basis of the treaty, asking them what they have to offer. If they can produce nothing that resembles trade goods, Garrar orders his men to attack.
- * A clever group of player characters might be able to assuage this group with offers of gifts. All are greedy, and they happily let the PCs pass unharmed for bribes worth 20 gp each. If the characters offer bribes but then cannot produce the requisite amount (180 gp value total), the lizardmen attack.
- * The PCs might try to convince the lizardmen that they are affiliates of the Red Cabal rather than the Celestial Order. Discerning the minor differences between humans is beyond Garrar's capability, so he asks the party to accompany him to his commander, Jarga. Four of the lizardmen serve as an armed escort for the PCs if they accede to this request (see "Armed Escort").

If the lizardmen decide to attack the party, Garrar (or another if he is dead) mans the mounted crossbow, which serves as 25% cover (giving the operator a -2 Armor Class bonus). The others split into pairs and run behind large rocks, which provide them with 50% cover (-4 Armor Class bonus). The lizardmen use crossbows as long as possible, switching to longswords when PCs close with them. If seriously threatened (half or more of their number wounded to 3 hp or less), the sentries run down the hill to the Fort Hope ruins where their compatriots are, bellowing warnings all the way. If the characters try to run past their attackers, the lizardmen pursue with longswords.

Any armed conflict on the hilltop alerts the eleven lizardmen at the fort (see "Reinforcements").

Garrar, lizardman: AC 4 (shield); MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 9; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (dagger, heavy crossbow, or longsword), Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d4 or 1d4+1 or 1d8; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XP 65.

Special Equipment: "Ballista" (heavy crossbow mounted on a pole; fires one quarrel every round for Dmg 2d6 to a range of 32'), heavy crossbow (wood-and-bone construction; designed to fire underwater without penalty), quiver with twenty heavy quarrels.

Lizardmen (8): AC 4 (shield); MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 9; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (dagger, heavy crossbow, or longsword), Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d4 or 1d4+1 or 1d8; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XI' 65 each.

Special Equipment: quarrels (quiver of 10).

Reinforcements

Jarga, leader of this lizardman occupational force, hears any combat occurring on the hill. After ordering his troops to find cover and wait to ambush any intruders, he investigates the disturbance, using his cloak of elvenkind to become 98% invisible. Jarga arrives at the bottom of the hill after three rounds of combat have occurred there to assess the situation. His tactics thereafter depend on what he finds:

- If his sentries are already dead, he allows the PCs to pass him on their way to the fort, then follows behind, still

invisible. He intends to let the intruders walk into the ambush, then attack them from behind to prevent their escape. (Go to "Fort Hope.")

- If his sentries are still alive, but obviously in trouble, Jarga signals his troops to rush the hill. He himself remains nearly invisible, choosing an appropriate target in the confusion before attacking.

Go to "Aftermath" when the PCs have finished fighting lizardmen.

Armed Escort

If the sentries decide to bring the PCs to Commander Jarga, four lizardmen march them roughly down the hill toward the smoking ruin that is the fort. If the party tries to fight the escort or escape, the scuffle draws Jarga's attention. He orders his ten soldiers at the fort to attack the intruders, then uses his cloak of elvenkind to become 98% invisible and chooses an appropriate target (such as a spellcaster) before joining the fray. Go to "Aftermath" when the PCs have finished fighting lizardmen, or to "Port Hope" if they go peacefully,

Aftermath

The PCs may interrogate any lizardmen they have captured alive. Such prisoners are unwilling to talk, but bribes or threats may persuade them to do so—assuming the language barrier does not prohibit communication altogether. These lizardmen know the following:

- They work for the Red Cabal at the behest of their new king, Aargaz.
- Their employers taught them how to approach a target invisibly, which is how their companions took the fort by surprise. Except for Jarga, they cannot turn invisible by themselves; one of the men in the red robes must do that for them.

They know nothing of Barillus, Venon, Archeal, or Archeal's wand. Go to "Fort Hope" when the characters decide to investigate the ruins.

Fort Hope

Read or paraphrase the following to the players when the characters enter Fort Hope:

The remnants of Fort Hope smolder before you. A few charred support beams of the wooden building still stand, but the roof and upper floors are gone. Scattered around the tower and the surrounding grounds are hundreds of bodies—both humans and lizardmen.

Approaches

Fort Hope has been burned to the ground. The group of lizardmen scavenging the ruins is an occupational force led by Jarga, a commander of some repute. He has ten lizardmen with him in the ruins, plus the nine stationed at the sentry post atop the hill (unless the characters have already dispatched these).

What happens when the PCs enter Fort Hope depends on how they approach:



state their business. He wears Archeal's *cloak of elvenkind*, which bears the pattern of celestial bodies common to the mages of the Order. Jarga speaks fluent Common, but prefers that his enemies underestimate his intelligence, so he affects broken Common as long as that is convenient. Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The tall lizardman clad in what could only be a fragment of Archeal's garb eyes you coldly, longsword in hand. Behind him, his troops stand ready to attack, with the cold gleam of avarice lighting their reptilian eyes. "I be Jaaargaaaaa," hisses the imposing figure before you. "What want you here, intrudersssssss? Perhapsss you want to ssservve ussss like the fleshy wormsssss you be?"

Jarga says little more than this until he has made a decision about these intruders. He is not likely to believe that the PCs have come to trade, nor can they bamboozle him into thinking they are Cabal members—even if they are especially convincing. Though he may be persuaded that such a heavily armed party is headed for Kayleigh's Folly, he will not allow those who discover his lizardmen in the fort to leave unless presented with a suitable bribe. In his case, only a powerful magic item would be acceptable. If such is not forthcoming, he orders his men to attack, intending to capture or slay the party. (See "Lizardman Strategy.")

Lizardman Strategy

If combat occurs within the fort, the lizardmen attempt to surround the party and fire missiles (crossbow bolts, spears, or javelins) while staying out of the characters' reach. Though the fort is in ruins, there are toppled stones and beams that can provide 25% to 50% cover for combatants on both sides, and the lizardmen take full advantage of this.

Though most of the lizardmen are unimaginative fighters, Jarga is not. At the earliest opportunity, he uses Archeal's *cloak* to turn nearly invisible and try to attack from behind, targeting a spellcaster if possible. (Note that all the lizardmen are well-trained in fighting while invisible, so they may be able to keep track of Jarga even while he is using the *cloak*.)

In addition, as the fort is on the river's edge, the lizardmen can use the water to their advantage. At any time, a lizardman may leap into the water and surface at a new position, or lurk just underwater until he can reach out and grab a character's leg. (Treat this as a wrestling attack. If successful, the lizardman drags his victim underwater.)

The lizardman troops will fight to the death unless their leader calls for surrender. Jarga himself will not fight to the death, but neither will he betray his fellow lizardmen if he can avoid it. He calls for an escape to the water if his men seem to be losing the fight. At his bidding, all the lizardmen dive into the river and swim for their lives toward the swamp. (The PCs may be able to pursue if they can match the lizardmen's swimming speed.) If all else fails, Jarga uses the *cloak* to turn himself nearly invisible and swim downstream as fast as possible. If Jarga runs, several of the other lizardmen will be inclined to surrender, as they are fearful of the wrath of King Aargaz should they return home without a victory.

- If the player characters have managed to avoid combat with the sentries and approach stealthily, they see eleven lizardmen (one wearing a cloak covered with celestial designs) gathering loot from the dead bodies. They can approach them openly and in peace, perhaps using one of the stories noted in the "Negotiations" section (see "Parley" for results).
- If the PCs have come under armed escort, ten of the lizardmen stand ready to fight, and Jarga approaches the group to assess the situation (see "Parley").
- If the lizardmen are waiting here in ambush, all ten leap out and attack with longswords, hoping to surprise the party (14 chance). After the surprise round (if applicable), see "Lizardman Strategy"
- If the PCs have managed to slay all twenty lizardmen from both locations, they can explore the ruins freely (see "Exploration").

Hundreds of bodies, both lizardman and human, lie within the charred wreckage. Jarga's troops have been busy gathering any personal treasures and weapons they can salvage from the casualties of both sides. Jarga himself is wearing one of the few magic items left from the battle: Archeal's *cloak of elvenkind*. It is black and festooned with stars and other heavenly bodies—like the raiment worn by the highest mages of the Celestial Order.

Parley

If the PCs arrive in the company of the sentries from the hilltop, or even under their own power, Jarga separates himself from the group and eyes them warily until they

Aftermath

If Jarga and his forces capture the PCs (or if they surrender to him), he instructs his men to ready themselves for departure. The lizardmen eat any horses the player characters have brought. Jarga then escorts the intruders to the lair as his prisoners, ensuring that each PC has at least one guard at all times. Adjudicate any escape attempts normally, using the tactics described in "Lizardman Strategy" as appropriate for combat. If the characters do not escape, they arrive in the swamp lair under guard five days later. Go to "The Lizard Kingdom."

If the PCs emerge victorious, they can interrogate any surviving lizardmen, including Jarga. All of them are uncooperative about answering questions, but appropriate bribes or threats loosen their tongues. They know that their victorious invasion force brought Archeal back to the swamp lair along with some prisoners, though they are not sure whether the "big wizard" was dead or merely unconscious at the time. Jarga took Archeal's *cloak* and soon discovered its magical properties. None of the lizardmen know who Barillus and Venon are, though Jarga did see what appeared to be a couple of other mages battling Archeal before the latter fell. Should the PCs ask any questions about the lair or the lizardman king, they discover that these soldiers have serious doubts about King Aargaz and his motives. Go to "Swamp Guides" when the characters have finished at Fort Hope.

Swamp Guides

Any live lizardmen whom the PCs have captured are uncooperative prisoners at best. If the PCs want them to serve as guides to the lair, they flatly refuse unless the characters agree to kill their king. (Even Jarga, who alone among his unit is happy under Aargaz's rule, realizes that defeat means death at the hands of his leader. Therefore, he decides that his fate would be better if the PCs kill King Aargaz.) If the characters do not agree to this proposal, they can still coerce the lizardmen to serve as guides with appropriate threats. (Coerced guides, however, will do their best to lead the party into traps and dangerous situations along the way.) If the PCs agree to kill the king, even Jarga becomes cooperative, though he requests that they promise to kill only the king and no other lizardmen,

The lizardmen have been gathering the arms, armor, and personal treasure of both the slain defenders and their fallen companions to take back home. They have piled the weapons (predominantly spears, hammers, longbows, and daggers), shields, studded leather armor, and chainmail into small, unorganized heaps. Among the piles are numerous pouches containing 4-11 gp, 2-10 sp, and 3-30 cp each. There are literally hundreds of items and money pouches here—so many that it would take the PCs days to sort through it all. The lizardmen had not yet even finished their gruesome task, so many of the bodies are still armored and in possession of their treasure.

Each lizardman carries 6 gp, 10 sp, and 20 cp. Jarga carries 13 gp, 20 sp, and 12 cp in a watertight belt pouch.

Go to "The Boy Fisherman" if the characters do not acquire a lizardman guide for the swamps. If they do have a guide and want to visit the swamp next, go to "The Swamp."

Jarga, male lizardman war leader: AC 4 (shield); MV 6, swim 12; HD 6; hp 22; THACO 15; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (dagger, heavy crossbow, or longsword), Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d4 or 1d4+1 or 1d8; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XP 270.

Special Equipment: *cloak of elvenkind*, kelp-based *potion of healing* (heals 1d8+2 hp for a lizardman, aquatic elf, or other gilled creature; heals 1d4 hp for a human or other land-based creature, but also causes nausea for 10 rounds prior to taking effect), quarrels (quiver of 10).

Lizardmen (10): AC 4 (shield); MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 9; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (dagger, heavy crossbow, or longsword), Dmg 1/62/162/1d6 or 1d4 or 1d4+1 or 1d8; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XP 65 each.

Special Equipment: quarrels (quiver of 10).

Exploration

There is little left to see here save for carnage. Most of the important salvageable items were taken to either Mount Antloch or the lizardmen's lair in the swamp immediately after the battle. The lizardman salvage crew has managed to gather only a bit of money and some usable weapons. There is no sign of Archeal or his wand,

The Boy Fisherman

Regis Polter, a precocious twelve-year-old lad from Kayleigh's Folly, sneaked out of bed a few nights ago, packed some food, stole his parents' boat, and rowed to Fort Hope in hopes of convincing a few soldiers to play cards with him. Finding a battle in progress, the boy hid his boat and watched, too frightened to show himself. He witnessed the battle and most of what has transpired since, including the party's arrival.

Ten minutes after the commotion stops at the fort, the boy inches his tiny rowboat out of the rushes along the bank and moves in for a closer look. (He fears the lizardmen terribly now, having witnessed their attack on Fort Hope.) If the PCs seem to be negotiating with the lizardmen, he tries to follow the group, but does not make contact. However, if the PCs have routed the lizardmen completely, Regis approaches triumphantly. Read or paraphrase the following to the players if Regis approaches them:

"Hail, fellow adventurers!" cries a childish voice from the direction of the river. From the rushes along the bank steps a mop-topped lad no more than thirteen years of age. He waves a crude bludgeon in the air and smiles broadly, though his face reflects what could be relief as well. "Humans have nothing to fear from armies of lizardmen while great fighters like you and I are here!" he shouts.

If the PCs welcome Regis, he approaches confidently, boasting of his exploits in battle. If not, he returns to his boat and sets off for home.

Though Regis had no part in the Battle of Fort Hope, he swears he was in the thick of the fighting, alongside his friends the soldiers. Although that isn't true, the boy did see the battle, and he can answer some of the PCs' questions about it. Regis knows the following:

- The lizardmen attacked from "not being there." (He is not familiar with the term "invisible.")
 - He didn't see any Cabal wizards, but he was amazed at how fast the lizardmen took the fort.
- * Several of the attackers exploded in fireballs, and he cheered each one.

- After the battle, the lizardmen torched the fort and took boatloads of prisoners downstream.
- He saw the lizardmen carry someone in a star-covered robe onto one of their boats,

Regis does not know where the lizardman lair is, if such exists, but he assumes that someone in town must know. He would be happy to accompany the characters back to Kayleigh's Folly, even offering to take up to two of them in his boat if they wish. However, he does his very best to maneuver the PCs into going to his parents' house and vouching for his activities. (He knows he is in for a beating from his father for running away, but thinks that coming home as the recognized sidekick of a group of heroes would do much to reduce his punishment.)

If the PCs accompany Regis, he chatters happily about life in Kayleigh's Folly. He doesn't know much about the treaty with the lizardmen, but has no qualms about making something up if he thinks the PCs are interested in that topic. The soldiers from Fort Hope frequented the town's business establishments, and he became acquainted with several of them. This was not the first time that Regis had made a midnight visit to the fort for a card game.

Regis knows most of the people in town by both name and reputation, but he is just "Old Man Polter's boy" to them. His dad, a crotchety barger in his late sixties, is a cruel disciplinarian. He lives with his third wife (Regis's mother), a young woman who mollycoddles their precocious son, Regis runs away often, and nearly everyone in Kayleigh's Folly has taken him home at least once. After witnessing this battle, however, Regis wants nothing more than to go home.



If the PCs accompany Regis home, go to "Doing Business in Kayleigh's Folly: Area 6." If desired, the party can make arrangements in town for the proper interment of the human remains at the fort before proceeding to the swamps. (Jamal can manage this for them if they request it.) Neither Regis nor Jamal will accompany the group to the swamp under any circumstances. If the characters set out for the swamp directly from Fort Hope (without stopping in town), go to "The River Trail." If they strike out for Mount Antloch from Fort Hope, go to "Journey to the Mount."

Regis Pelter, male human child: AC 10, MV 12 (unencumbered); hp 3, THACO 20; #AT 1 (club); Dmg 1d6; SZ M; (5'4" tall); ML unsteady (7); Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 9; AL CN; XP? Nil.

The River Trail

It takes two hours for a mounted party to get to the swamp from Fort Hope, and four hours for an unmounted party. The PCs have no encounters along the way. Go to "The Swamp."

The Swamp

The swamp is not a hospitable place, as anyone can tell at a glance. Cattails and sedgegrass abound, as do mosquitoes, leeches, and all manner of biting, stinging insects.

Alligators sun themselves on the banks, sliding into the water to follow any potential prey that passes. The submerged rocks and snags in the shallow waterways are enough to keep even an alert barger busy.

The PCs may come here alone, or they may approach the swamp with any of several guides (friendly or hostile lizardmen, or even a hired human from Kayleigh's Folly). It takes the characters five uncomfortable hours to reach the lizardmen's lair by barge or swampboat, or ten hours on foot. Flying characters have no chance of spotting the lizardmen's lair from the air, as the overhanging branches of the ancient trees shield it from view.

The party faces a different swamp hazard depending upon its mode of travel:

- **Walking/Swimming:** If the PCs are traversing the swamp on foot, either alone or with a hostile guide, they are vulnerable to bites from a wide variety of disease-carrying insects. Each character must make a successful Constitution check every hour or contract swamp fever. Those so afflicted become queasy after a number of turns equal to their Constitution scores. Thereafter, each infected character must make a successful Constitution check each turn to avoid collapsing until a cure *disease* spell is applied. If a hired guide or friendly lizardman is with the party, he or she gives the characters a pot of foul-smelling grease with which to smear themselves before entering the swamp; this prevents the insects from biting.
- **Barge or Swampboat:** If the characters are traveling by boat, either alone or with a hostile guide, there is a 50% chance each hour that the boat strikes a submerged rock and becomes disabled, unless at least one PC is actively checking ahead for underwater hazards at all times. Both friendly lizardmen and the hired guides from Kayleigh's Folly automatically do this, negating the hazard potential.

Swamp Encounters

In addition to the hazards noted previously, the player characters may have various encounters while searching the swamp for the lizardmen's lair. These encounters vary according to what (if any) companions they have along, as follows:

- If the PCs are traveling alone and without a map, they quickly become lost, wandering the swamps for an extra five hours (over and above the time required for their mode of travel) before stumbling upon the lizardman colony. They have all the encounters from the Swamp Encounters List, in order, one every two hours.
- A group with one or more friendly (but not *charmed*) lizardmen as guides experiences only Encounter 1 on the Swamp Encounters List because of the guides' expertise in navigating the swamps safely.
- If the characters have come here with lizardmen who want to see them killed but cannot manage it themselves, they have Encounters 1, 3, and 4 on the Swamp Encounters List, in that order. In each case, the guides

apologize afterward for not seeing the danger.

- If the PCs have hired a human guide from Kayleigh's Folly, they experience only Encounters 1 and 3 on the Swamp Encounters List until they reach a point one mile from the lizardmen's lair. The guide stops there and directs the characters into the bogs, waiting patiently for their return if so contracted. The party members have one additional encounter from the list (DM's choice) during the last leg of their journey. They do not, however, have a chance to become lost.
- If the characters have *charmed* someone (human or lizardman) into serving as a guide, they experience Encounters 1 and 3 on the Swamp Encounters List because the charm has a deleterious effect on the guide's ability to spot danger.

When the PCs reach to the lizardman lair, go to "The Lizard Kingdom."

The Lizard Kingdom

Several months ago, the assassination of old King Daar threw this relatively stable and peaceful lizardman tribe

Swamp Encounters List

Any or all of the following encounters may occur while the player characters search the swamp for the lair of the lizardmen. See "Swamp Encounters" for details on which encounters occur under the party's particular circumstances.

1. Mosquitoes! A mosquito swarm descends on the party. The PCs can hear it coming 1 round before it hits, but lizardmen hear it 4 rounds ahead of time because of their familiarity with swamp sounds. Hostile lizardman guides do not aid the PCs with avoiding the insects; they merely remark that beings with such soft hides should stay out of swamps. (The insects cannot bite lizardmen because of their scaly hides.) Guides of an type who are well-disposed toward the party (hired humans, friendly lizardmen, or even *charmed* lizardmen) throw blankets to the PCs if they are aboard a boat and tell them to cover up, or shout for them to submerge if they are walking or swimming. Those **who** do so avoid all mosquito bites, but cannot fight or cast spells. Human guides aboard a swampboat next light a fire in a cauldron and use a blanket to direct its smoke at the swarm, driving it off in 1d4 rounds. (Lizardmen use fire only rarely, so this is not a tactic that occurs to them.) Any PC who dives underwater to avoid the bugs must make a successful Constitution check, as described in "The Swamp: Walking/Swimming." Exposed characters suffer 10d10 mosquito bites during the swarm's attack. This causes a total of only 1d4 points of damage, but is extremely uncomfortable and requires a Constitution check for every ten bites suffered. Failure indicates that the victim has contracted swamp fever (see "The swamp: Walking/Swimming").

2 Alligator Alert. Five alligators are sunning themselves on rocks near the water's edge. They slide into the water to attack anything passing. If the characters are in a boat, the alligators buffet the vessel with their heads, trying to drive it against a rock or onto the bank. Each round, there is a 5% chance of attacking alligator that the creatures succeed in disabling or beaching the boat. Once they have

stopped it by one method or another, they crawl aboard and attack anyone (human or lizardman) still inside it. The alligators follow the boat until three of their number are dead.

Alligators (5): AC 5; MV 6, swim 12; HD 3; hp 15,13,12,12,10; THACO 17; #AT 2 [bite and tail lash]; Dmg 2d4 and 1d12; SA surprise; SZ L (10' long); ML average (9); Int animal(1); AL N; XP 65 each.

Special Abilities: SA-surprise (-2 penalty to opponent's surprise roll).

3. Snake Attack. Two asps slide off a tree branch onto non-reptilian characters (determine their targets randomly), surprising on 1-4. They bite immediately.

Asps (2): AC 6; MV 15; HD 2+1; hp 7,4; THACO 19; #AT 1 (bite); Dmg 1; SA poison; SZ S (4' long); ML average (8); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 175 each.

Special Abilities: SA-poisonous bite (victim must save vs. poison or suffer 3d4 points of damage after 1d6 rounds).

4. Lizardman Watch Party. The lizardman colony always has a six-member watch party patrolling the area. These sentries are very quiet, surprising on 1-3. All of them use longbows to attack, staying at the far end of medium range. They have 50% cover (-4 bonus to AC) at all times unless a character manages to close with one. The watch party follows the PCs for 1d4+1 rounds, peppering any visible targets with arrows. (If the player characters have hostile lizardmen along, the latter have led them into this encounter purposely and will join the attack as soon as firing commences.) The watch party will not report this encounter to anyone in the colony-its members do not want to let the king know that humans are wandering the swamps, for fear he will mount an all-out offensive. They just want the invaders to leave.

Lizardmen (6): AC 5; MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 9 each; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/&w/bite) or 2 (longbow); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d6/1d6; SA surprise; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XP 65 each.

Special Equipment: arrows (quiver of 10).

Special Abilities: SA-surprise on 1-3.

into chaos. The killer, a foreign lizard king named Aargaz, seized the throne and instituted a reign of terror such as the colony had never seen. He demanded human sacrifices, and when his subjects objected, Aargaz slew some of them in response. The terror Aargaz **has** inflicted upon these lizardmen through such tactics has bent many of them to his will. Trade with Kayleigh's Folly has stopped, and all lizardmen have orders to capture any humans they find for sacrifice.

Aargaz's subjects have been less than enthusiastic so far about hunting humans outside the swamps, so captures have been few. Unhappy with the number of potential sacrifices he has acquired so far, the new king recently demanded war on humans-any humans.

When word of this situation spread to the Red Cabal, its leaders recruited Aargaz and his followers to attack Fort Hope, promising them all the survivors as sacrifices. An outcry went up among the older lizardmen, who felt there was no reason to become involved in a human war. But when Aargaz sacrificed the most vocal objectors as **war** offerings, all opposition to his plan ceased. The Cabal wizards then instructed the king's subjects in how to move and attack while invisible. The lizardmen stormed Fort Hope under a *muss invisibility* spell and emerged victorious, but at a very high cost-about a third of the colony's population died in battle. Now the remaining residents have serious doubts that Aargaz's rule will leave any lizardman alive. Still, none are willing to challenge him. All the leaders of the old regime died in Aargaz's takeover, and no new leaders have emerged to date.

Read or paraphrase the following to the players as the PCs approach the edge of the swamp:

Before you lies an expanse of deep green vegetation. Small waterways, little more than creeks, wind their way through the damp hillocks of land, disappearing into darkness under the overhanging branches. Insects buzz lazily past, and occasionally something splashes in the nearly still water. Moss and vines hang from the tree branches, almost concealing the trunks from view. A fetid smell arises from the murky swampwater.

Arrival

How the PCs go about penetrating the lizardmen's domain may depend in some measure upon how they got here. Two six-member lizardman watch parties, identically armed, patrol the perimeter of the colony at all times.

Various possible approaches, with the lizardmen's response to each, are listed below.

- **Neutral Approach (No Guides):** If the PCs approach the colony on their own and request entry peacefully, one of the lizardman watch parties attacks and tries to capture them as sacrifices. These soldiers ignore any requests to speak with the king and do not accept bribes, for they know the king's loyalists are probably watching them, ready to report any deviations from Aargaz's orders. They call for assistance if the characters prove too tough for them, bringing the other watch party into the fray on the next round. If the lizardmen succeed in capturing the PCs, or if the latter surrender, their captors place them in the prisoners' cage with the survivors of the Rattle of Fort Hope to await sacrifice. See "Colony Detail: Area 4."

* **Frontal Assault.** The characters may choose to attack

the colony outright. Any friendly lizardmen accompanying the party try to dissuade the group from attacking their friends and families. Hostile lizardman guides turn on the group as soon as armed conflict begins. The lizardman sentry party on duty mounts a credible defense while raising the general alarm. This brings sixty combat-ready lizardmen to the scene over the course of 3 rounds. Seeing the characters as invaders threatening their colony, these lizardmen attack with intent to kill unless the PCs manage to communicate other intentions during the battle. If they do so, the lizardman soldiers change tactics and attempt to take the party into custody, delivering them to the prisoners' cage (see "Colony Detail: Area 4") if successful.

Should the characters somehow manage to defeat the entire military contingent, the remaining lizardmen flee the area, abandoning their homes and the prisoners. Aargaz and Haggaal emerge to face the party; **they** fight to the death.

- **Approach with Hostile Lizardmen.** If the characters come here in the company of lizardmen who want them killed, their guides seize an opportune moment to rebel and call for help. One watch party arrives the first round; the other the second. If these sentry parties find the PCs too tough, they raise the general alarm, bringing sixty combat-ready lizardmen into the fray over the next three rounds.

* **Approach with Friendly Lizardmen.** If the PCs have friendly or *charmed* lizardmen as guides, they can negotiate various means of entry. Their guides can show them an entrance around the back of the **colony** if they **want** to get to the lizard king without going through the entire lair. If asked for advice **on** how to proceed, they recommend against marching in and trying to gather allies against Aargaz, as the lizard king can easily rally the lizardmen against rebels and invaders. Instead, they suggest entry by swimming rather than walking for the sake of stealth, offering the PCs their foul-smelling grease to prevent insect attacks in the water (see "The Swamp: Walking/Swimming"). If the players come up with other potentially feasible ideas for entry, adjudicate them appropriately.

Lizardmen Soldiers, male (72): AC 4 (shield); MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 9 each; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (dagger, heavy crossbow, or longsword), Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d4 or 1d4+1 or 1d8; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XP 65 each.

Special Equipment: heavy crossbow (designed to work underwater without penalty), quarrels (quiver of 10).

Rallying Support

As noted above, there is widespread discontent in the lizardman camp over the events that have transpired since Aargaz came to power, but fear of challenging him keeps his subjects compliant with his policies. Few have the courage to resist carrying out a direct order from the king, and ten of them (the royal guards) are completely loyal to Aargaz. (The royal guards spend most of their time either protecting the king's person in his hut, or off-duty in their own quarters, so the PCs will not encounter them in a covert negotiation attempt.)

Unless told otherwise by friendly guides, the lizardmen of this colony view the presence of any PC in their lair as an invasion and attack to kill. (They have expected retaliation for their recent acquisitions of sacrificial victims for some time now, and they assume that's why the characters

are there.) The PCs may be able to change their minds by protesting their good intentions while defending themselves, but they would not do well to kill any lizardmen at all—even opponents in a fight—while trying to win their way into the colony's good graces.

Should they succeed in getting the rank-and-file lizardmen to talk with them, the best the PCs can hope to achieve is the right to challenge Aargaz to individual combat without interference. So great is the colony's fear of Aargaz that the residents agree to let the PCs challenge him only if convinced that they stand a better-than-average chance of killing him. Tales of the party's battle prowess from friendly guides are sufficient; otherwise they request a test fight between one PC and one lizardman. If the character wins handily but does not kill his or her opponent, the lizardmen are impressed enough to agree to the plan. If the PCs kill any lizardmen here or do not wish to challenge the king, the lizardmen deny their support and request that the party leave quietly. No lizardmen—not even Jarga or any of the other military subcommanders—are willing to stand with the PCs and fight Aargaz directly, though they may agree to keep the fight fair by preventing Aargaz's loyalists from aiding him.

If the PCs describe Archeal, the lizardmen affirm that his body arrived here after the Battle of Fort Hope. As best they know, Aargaz has it in his hut as a war prize. The lizardmen will not support a PC plan to sneak into the king's hut and retrieve Archeal; in fact, they threaten to expose and capture the PCs if they insist on trying. They know what would happen if such a plan were successful—the enraged king

would simply kill a few dozen lizardmen to improve the vigilance of the others. Only a plan to challenge the king to fair combat has any chance of winning support.

Challenging Aargaz

If the PCs strike an agreement with the lizardmen to challenge their king in return for the tribe's cooperation, the lizardmen form a cordon around the characters to mask their presence from onlookers and escort them to Haggaa's hut. There, they convince the shaman to deliver the party's challenge to Aargaz. The characters may also approach Haggaa independently if they can sneak into the encampment and identify the correct hut without arousing suspicion. In that case, Haggaa puts the same challenge proposal to them and considers their qualifications in the same manner that his people would.

If the challenge comes via Haggaa, the king agrees to fight up to three PCs simultaneously in the Kill Pool. If the characters try to challenge the lizard king themselves, he does not accept, simply ordering his royal guards to attack them.

Should the king accept the PCs' challenge, go to "The Challenge Match."

The Challenge Match

All official challenges are resolved in the Kill Pool (see "Colony Detail: Area 5"). The royal guard escorts the PCs to the pool, where lizardmen have already begun to gather.

Important Lizardmen

Only two members of the colony are out of the ordinary—the king and the shaman. Neither of them appears unless there is a major disturbance; if the PCs have penetrated the colony quietly, the two remain in their huts, unaware of the incursion.

King Aargaz

A hulking brute of a lizardman, Aargaz is also smarter and tougher than his subjects. He has an amulet that provides him with 20% magic resistance, plus a trident with which he can inflict terrible damage on his enemies. (In hands other than his, the weapon functions as a normal trident.)

Aargaz is extremely evil and quite arrogant. He will accept any challenge (see "Colony Detail: Area 5") as a matter of personal honor. But if he starts to lose, he abandons the concept of a fair fight and commands his royal guards to intercede for him, which they do if Jarga or some other lizard soldier friendly to the party does not prevent it. Aargaz cares for nothing but himself and his personal gratification, and he will sacrifice even his own guards to preserve himself or gain an advantage.

Aargaz, male lizard king: AC 3; MV 9, swim 12; HD 8; hp 48; THACO 13; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (trident); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d8 or 3d6+2 (double damage or 15 points, whichever is greater, on an attack roll 5 or more greater than the score needed to hit); MR 20%; SZ L (8' tall); ML champion (16); Int average (10); AL CE; XP 975.

Special Equipment: amulet (confers 20% magic resistance on the wearer), trident. (in his hands only, this weapon inflicts 3d6+2 points of damage on a successful hit, or double damage—minimum

15 points—on an attack roll 5 or more greater than the score needed to hit. In other hands it functions as a normal trident.)

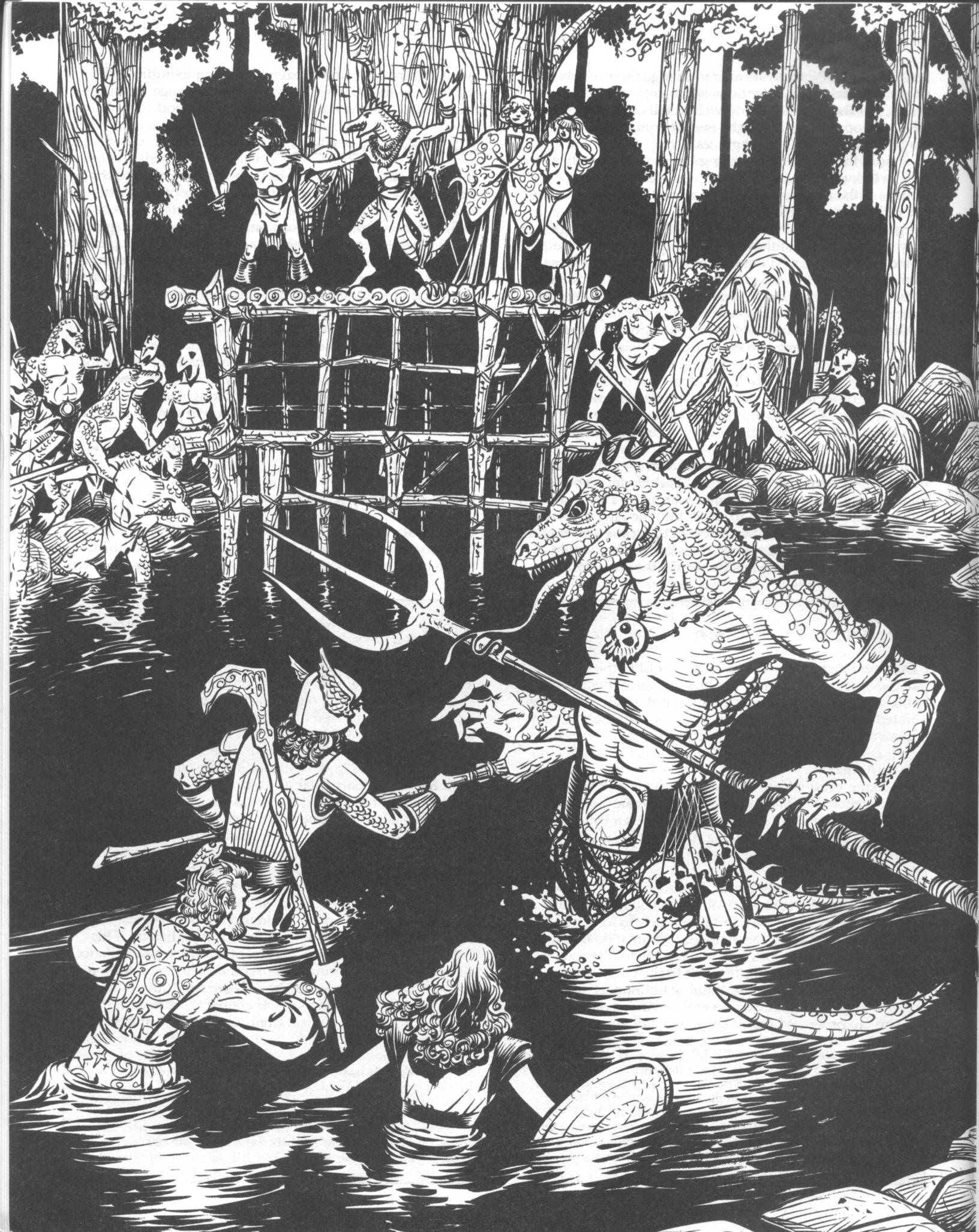
Haggaa, the Shaman

The PCs may be able to gain an ally in Haggaa, the shaman. He is slightly older than the average lizardman and wears a blue-green hide kilt in honor of Semuanya, the lizardman god. A very forceful individual, Haggaa commands the respect and admiration of the tribe—thus, he is the only one capable of leading the colony if Aargaz dies. He has no particular aspirations toward leadership, but he would not shirk it if the lizardmen became leaderless. Haggaa is still alive because of his clerical power and because he had the wisdom to welcome Aargaz as a sending from Semuanya. (He knows this is not true, having long ago determined Aargaz's alignment, but prudence demanded that he preserve his own life so that he could aid his people.)

In the absence of other options, Haggaa accepts Aargaz's authority, tending to the spiritual health of his tribe and biding his time. If presented with a good chance to free the tribe from Aargaz's tyranny without additional lizardman losses, however, he will seize it. If the PCs have gained his confidence and cooperation, he will demand a Kill Pool contest from Aargaz on their behalf, then act as the judge.

Haggaa, male lizardman C7: AC 5; MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 15; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (club); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6; or 1d6+1; SZ M (7' tall); ML elite (14); Int average (8); AL N; XP 975.

Spells Memorized (3/3/2/1): 1st—cure light wounds, detect evil, protection from evil; 2nd—augury, snake charm, speak with animals; 3rd—dispel magic, prayer; 4th—tongues.



Any PCs not involved in the challenge must watch the fight from Haggal's side, under the observant eyes of a full sentry party charged with ensuring that they do not interfere. Of course, Aargaz feels free to break the Kill Pool rules with impunity. If he thinks he's losing, the king calls for his followers to dive in and aid him or rain arrows on the PCs. Haggal counters by forbidding interference from any lizardman—this prevents all save the royal guard from obeying the king's command. If any military subcommanders (Jarga or others within the colony) are well-disposed toward the characters, they forcibly prevent the royal guard from joining the fray. Otherwise, the PCs in the Kill Pool must contend with the king and his guards.

If the PCs win and do not deliver the killing stroke to Aargaz, one of the military commanders enters the pool and does so. Go to "The King is Dead" from here. Should the king win, he orders any surviving characters and Haggal thrown into the bamboo cage for sacrifice that very night. At this point, no lizardmen cooperate any further with the PCs; they must escape on their own or become sacrifices to the lizard god.

Colony Detail

The lizardman colony currently consists of 132 noncombatant males, 175 noncombatant females, 72 soldiers, 189 children, 35 alligators, a few snakes, and 28 Fort Hope survivors, plus King Aargaz and Haggal. The lizardmen live with their families in crude huts made of sedgegrass and cattails, situated on land that is about half solid ground and half swampwater. Cross-shaped totems bedecked with alligator hides surround the outer boundary of the colony.

The residents of the colony move freely about the interior of the compound, but few approach the boundary defined by the ring of totems. There are two lizardman sentry parties on duty at all times, patrolling just outside the boundary.

Alligators (35): AC 5; MV 6, swim 12; HD 3; hp 12 each; THACO 17; #AT 2 (bite and tail lash); Dmg 2d4 and 1d12; SA surprise; SZ L (10' long); ML average (9); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 65 each.

Special Abilities: SA-surprise (-2 penalty to opponent's surprise roll).

Lizardmen, male and female noncombatants (307): AC 5; MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 9 each; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (club); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d6; SZ M (78 tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XP 65 each.

Lizardmen Soldiers, male (72): AC 4 (shield); MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 9 each; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (dagger, heavy crossbow, or longsword); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d4 or 1d4+1 or 1d8; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XI' 65 each.

Special Equipment: heavy crossbow (designed to work underwater without penalty), quarrels (quiver of 10).

Lizardmen, juvenile (189): AC 6; MV 6, swim 12; HD 1+1; hp 5 each; THACO 20; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d3; SZ M (7' tall); ML unsteady (5); Int low (7); AL N; XP 25 each.

Lizardman subleaders, male (4): AC 5; MV 6, swim 12; HD 4; hp 17 each; THACO 17; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (longsword); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d8; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XP 120 each.

Asps (4): AC 6; MV 15; HD 2+1; hp 5 each; THACO 19; #AT 1 (bite); Dmg 1; SA poison; SZ S (4' long); ML average (8); Int animal (1); AL N; XI' 175 each.

Special Abilities: SA-poisonous bite (victim must save vs. poison or suffer 3d4 points of damage after 1d6 rounds).

Numbered locations on the colony map are defined below. Unlabeled buildings are huts containing no furniture. Each hut does, however, have a few interior decorations (alligator teeth, bone tools, hides, and so forth) that serve to make each dwelling unique.

1. **Totems.** At each of these points is a totem—a large, X-shaped, wooden cross festooned with alligator hides. Collectively, these structures define the boundaries of the lizardmen's lair. These are warning signs; those who venture past them without escort are considered trespassers and subject to attack by a guard patrol of six lizardmen armed with longswords. The totems also have religious significance, so the lizardmen are zealous about their upkeep.

Lizardmen (6): AC 4 (shield); MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 9 each; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (longsword); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d8; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XP 65 each.

2. **Altar to Semuanya.** A stone altar stands in front of an effigy of the lizardman god, Semuanya. The granite statue is so crude that most casual observers cannot even identify the shape. The top of the altar bears many bloodstains—some very recent.

3. **Haggal's Home.** The shaman lives in a simple hut like most of the other lizardmen, but he has decorated the interior and exterior of his home with dozens of totems, idols, and hangings. If the PCs have an audience with Haggal, it occurs here.

4. **Bamboo Cage.** This crude cage constructed of swamp bamboo holds the twenty-eight human survivors of the Battle of Fort Hope. The lizardmen have not sacrificed any of them yet, but they plan to begin the process in two days. (Haggal has convinced Aargaz to delay until the signs are right, but he cannot hold off the lizard king's appetite for carnage too long.) A wooden bar secured with coiled vines serves as a lock for the cage, and a sentry party of six lizardmen stands guard.

All the prisoners are exhausted, unarmored, and in about half the cases—wounded. Haggal has allowed them to tend their wounds as best they could, but has not provided them with any first aid.

If the lizardmen capture the PCs, they imprison them here. If the characters appear to be powerful and capable, however, the sentry party on guard approaches the cage that same night, offering to free the PCs in exchange for their promise to kill the king. Go to "Rallying Support" if they agree.

Lizardmen (6): AC 4 (shield); MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 9 each; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (longsword); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d8; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XI' 65 each.

5. **The Kill Pool.** This 5-foot-deep swampwater pool in the center of the colony is where all official challenges and important meetings take place. Custom dictates that all able-bodied members of the colony witness the event from the sides of the pool, but no one save the combatants may actually enter.

6. **Aargaz's Compound.** This is the former hut of Old King Daar. A wall built of small rocks surrounds it on three sides, leaving only the main entrance open. Ringing the hut are six of the ten royal lizardman guards. (The remaining four are inside their own huts, asleep.)

Within the hut are King Aargaz (if still alive), four terrified female lizardmen, and Archeal's body, as well as Aargaz's personal possessions (hides of swamp animals, a sapphire worth 500 gp, and 350 gp in assorted coins). Aargaz has mounted the wizard's corpse, still clad in the robes of the Celestial Order, on his wall as a prize of war, even though he did not kill him.

Lizardmen, female (307): AC 5; MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 7 each; THACO 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XP 65 each.

Lizardman royal guards (10): AC 4 (shield); MV 6, swim 12; HD 6; hp 22 each; THACO 15; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) or 1 (dagger, heavy crossbow, or longsword); Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6 or 1d4 or 1d4+1 or 1d8; SZ M (7' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL N; XP 270.

The King is Dead

If the PCs defeat the lizard king by any means, the tribe hails them as liberators. Haggal, if he is alive, assumes control of the colony; otherwise Jarga or another subcommander takes over, Haggal knows a new king will appear someday, but will maintain the status quo until that time. The shaman intends to reaffirm the trade agreement with Kayleigh's Folly at the earliest opportunity as well.

The PCs may enter Aargaz's compound and take anything they wish from it. Archeal's body is there (see

"Colony Detail: Area 6"). Though the wizard's corpse is quite the worse for wear, it is obvious that neither a trident thrust nor rending by claws was the cause of Archeal's death. Venon's dart is gone, but a search reveals the tiny hole it made in his neck. If the PCs have the means to detect poison, they find traces of it around the wound. Archeal's wand is nowhere to be found, and no lizardman remembers seeing anything like it.

The PCs may also release the human prisoners, tend their wounds, and take them along when they leave. The colony's new leader provides the PCs with barges and willing guides to take the prisoners back to Kayleigh's Folly. But the leader will not agree to commit his people to battle on behalf of the Order, or anyone else. His war-weary tribe needs to rest, and talk of allegiances can wait for another day.

If the PCs want to drop off the ex-prisoners at Kayleigh's Folly, go to "Delivering Archeal's Body." Otherwise, go to "Part 2: The Mountain Passage."

Part 2: The Mountain Passage

When the PCs are ready to proceed to Mount Antloch, they must journey up the Castellon River to the mountains. Unless they can find the secret passage of which Ezakion spoke, they have little hope of locating the Cabal's secret lair unless they have access to find the path or similar magic.

Read or paraphrase the following information to the players when they begin their journey along the Castellon:



Far in the distance, you can see the mountains rising to meet the sky. Order intelligence indicates that Mount Antloch, the second-highest of those peaks, harbors a secret Cabal outpost. It is there that the search for Archeal's wand must continue. Ezakion said a frontal attack on the enemy stronghold would be too risky and would give the Cabal time to destroy the item for which you seek. Therefore, you must find the secret passage that he says lies somewhere underneath the mountains.

The silvery Castellon River winds its way between the mountains and the swamp. You know the river heads east for several miles, turning in and out of gradually higher hills. Then it veers north, away from Mount Antloch.

The PCs can travel on the Castellon by river barge (see "Kayleigh's Folly: The Docks") or move along the trail by the water's edge on foot or horseback. No encounters occur during the eastbound leg of the party's journey,

The Bend in the River

The trip from Kayleigh's Folly to the bend in the Castellon takes one and a half days of travel by boat or on horseback, or two and a half days on foot. If the player characters have been traveling by river barge, they must disembark here to continue toward the mountains, and the Castellon turns abruptly north,

At the bend in the river lives an elderly gray elf named Theolyn Theobourn. Once a member of the Celestial Order, he left some years ago to pursue his true interest—breeding new kinds of animals. Theolyn has recently been experimenting with the local rodent population and has created an unusual strain. These rodents, which Theolyn has named army lemmings, are unusually nervous and prone to using their special attack form—a wild charge—against anything that disturbs them,

Read or paraphrase the following to the players when the PCs reach the bend in the river:

You have followed the gently-flowing Castellon through grasslands and around ever-rising hills toward the mountains that are your goal. Now you have reached the spot where the river bends north, forcing you to leave its silvery waters behind as you proceed **overland toward** Mount Antloch.

Just at the bend of the river is a large hill, atop which sits a small, cozy-looking **house**. Birds sing in the trees near the house, and multicolored flowers surround the path leading to its door. The lower portion of the hill has **little** vegetation, however. The ravaged ground is packed down hard in some places and churned up as though by some armed conflict in others. A few golden-furred rodents peek out of holes in the ground, their tiny red eyes marking your every move. A dock stretches out into the **water** from the bank nearest the house, and a small rowboat bobs beside it.

The rowboat belongs to Theolyn. Anyone examining the dock can see that it has suffered some terrible damage. The supports are intact, but there are gaping holes in the boards along the top, and several of the planks are split. It will hold the weight of one human-sized individual, but no more. If the PCs have come here by river barge, they can tie up their boat here in preparation for continuing overland.

The golden-furred rodents are army lemmings. More than six thousand of them live in and around this hill. Any noise other than birdsong or the soothing voice of Theolyn spooks these highly nervous creatures, who immediately charge the source of the disturbance en masse. The sound of hoofbeats, the scraping of the boat against the dock, or just conversation between party members is sufficient to start a charge.

This action amounts to a single attack against the source of the disturbance. The moment an unfamiliar sound reaches their ears, the creatures burst from cover en masse and race pell-mell toward the offending sound. Their target always gains initiative, but must make a successful saving throw vs. death or be rooted to the spot in terror. The creatures' razor-sharp claws tear up earth, vegetation, animal life, structures, and anything else unfortunate enough to be in their path. Army lemmings do not bite upon reaching their target; they simply trample it and continue on past it in a straight line. Thereafter, they run until exhausted or until they reach water. (A good dousing brings them back to whatever senses they have and stops the charge.) Though not suicidal by intent, charging army lemmings ignore the presence of any hazards.

Read or paraphrase the following to the players if the PCs disturb the lemmings:

From the hillside arises an anxious **chittering** sound, which shortly becomes a deafening roar. The ground shakes **beneath** your feet as hundreds of golden-furred rodents burst forth from the ground and race toward you, their tiny red eyes fixed in deadly purpose. Dirt flies everywhere as they charge down the hill, a relentless wave of destruction. Sunlight glints off huge metallic claws on the feet of those in the forefront of the charge.

Each character in the party must make a successful saving throw vs. death magic or be rooted to the spot in fear, losing his or her action for this round. Success indicates that the character can stand and attack, dive into the river, or take some other evasive action, as desired.

If the party is on the same side of the river as the lemmings, any characters who fail to evade them suffer the full brunt of their attack as the creatures trample them and continue on into the water. If the party is on the opposite bank, the lemmings' charge takes them into the river first, which breaks up the charge before it reaches the PCs. The incident also destroys the dock. Once the charge is over, the lemmings climb out of the water, chittering, and return at a normal pace to their holes in the ground.

Army lemmings (6,321): AC 9; MV 12; HD 1-1; hp 2; #AT 0; Dmg 0; SA fear, group attack; SZ S (6"); ML unreliable (2); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 5 each.

Special Abilities: SA-fear (those witnessing a charge must save vs. death magic or lose an action), group attack (a charging herd attacks once as a 15 HD creature vs. each target in its path for 8d6 points of damage).

Army Lemming Research Station

Once the attack of the lemmings is over, Theolyn comes out to assess the situation. Read or paraphrase the following to the players:



As the destructive rodents return to their homes in the hillside, a green-robed elf emerges from the house on the hill, parchment and pen in hand. He gazes at the creatures, the dock, and you, makes a few notes, then hides the pen and paper in the folds of his robe. Motioning for you to approach, he calls out, "Come on up; it's all over Soup's on, and it's dry inside."

The house is made of stone except for its door, which seems to be metal. Candlelight glows from unshuttered windows. Vegetables grow in a garden on the west side of the tiny building, and flowers line the walkway.

True to his word, Theolyn has hot soup and warm blankets ready for the PCs if they take him up on his offer of hospitality. If they attack him, he defends himself as best he can until the lemmings charge again-which they will as soon as they hear the sounds of battle. Because of his familiarity with these creatures, Theolyn does not have to make a saving throw vs. death magic to have a chance of avoiding the creatures. He immediately attempts to disengage himself from any opponent and hide in his cellar (accessible through a trapdoor in the floor) when he hears them coming. From there, Theolyn watches from a peephole and waits for a chance to grow one of the army lemmings to massive proportions. He can control any one lemming via his *helm*, breaking its charge and directing it against the PCs. He does not wish to kill anyone--only to force any hostile invaders away from his home.

If the PCs accept Theolyn's hospitality, he offers them fresh vegetable soup, herbal tea, and healing for their wounds (to the extent of his clerical ability). The inside of the one-room stone cabin is cluttered with books, scrolls, and notes in many languages. Piles of paper cover the lone

table, and in the corner is an unmade bed with a single wooden chair beside it. Theolyn's clothes, hopelessly out of elven fashion, are piled near the bed.

Though nothing fascinates Theolyn so much as his army lemmings, he is rather lonely and willing to converse at length with his guests on any topic that interests them. The PCs can obtain the following information from him. He begins with the first two points and continues on the subject of army lemmings indefinitely unless diverted. The characters must steer the conversation with questions to obtain any of the other information on the list.

- * "Theolyn Theobourn, at your service. I'm a sage specializing in breeding and development of unusual creatures. And who might you be?"
- * "Yes, I bred those lovely little creatures out there. I call them Rodentae Theolynia Rabie, or army lemmings for short. Aren't they amazing? They can destroy houses, farms--anything in their path. I'm so sorry you had to find that out the hard way, so to speak, but any noise with which they're unfamiliar spooks them and starts a charge. It's all the inbreeding I had to do to develop their claws, I expect-it made them incredibly nervous and high-strung. I've been working on ways to harness their digging ability for use in farming-why, no one would need plows anymore! But I'm still in the early stages of research on these creatures."
- "I've lived here ten years. Before this I lived at the Citadel of the Celestial Order-you're not Red Cabal people, are you? Such an unfortunate business, that feud. You'd think such intelligent beings as mages could get along. That's why I finally left; I just couldn't stand all the intrigue and sneaking around anymore. No one was getting any magical research done unless it had to do with defeating the Cabal. I much prefer working alone--- I can pursue my research in peace here. I do get lonely though-the lemmings pretty much prevent me from having visitors."
- "I've never been to Mount Antloch, but I've run into Garth, the stone giant who guards the pass leading up there. He lives alone, with just some wolverines for pets, but he's in the employ of the Cabal. He once tried to drive me off this hilltop-thought I was too close to his masters, I guess. I shoed him away with a *lightning bolt*, but not before I read his mind with the *helm of telepathy* I brought with me when I left the Order. Found out there's a secret passage that runs under Mount Antloch. It starts at the base of the first southern foothill."

Though he will certainly be as helpful with information as he can, Theolyn will not accompany the PCs or allow them to take any of his lemmings for an assault on Mount Antloch. He is quite busy with his research, and the lemmings do not take well to travel, as the slightest noise spooks them.

The PCs are welcome to stay here as long as they wish. There is plenty of room on the floor in front of Theolyn's fireplace for them to sleep.

When the PCs are ready to continue their journey, Theolyn bids them farewell and invites them to stop back on their return journey. Go to "Journey to the Mount."

Theolyn Theobourn, gray elf C7/M9: AC 0 (bracers of defense AC 2, Dex bonus); MV 12 (unencumbered); hp 40; THACO 16 (14 with quarterstaff +2 #AT 1 (*quarterstaff* +2 or dagger); Dmg 1d6+2 or 1d4; SZ M (5' tall); ML elite (14); Str 12, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 12; AL LN; XP Nil.

Special Equipment: bag **Of** holding, boots **Of** elvenkind, comb*, dagger (x2), dissecting tools*, frog*, green robe (with a *deepockets* spell upon it), handkerchief*, helm of telepathy, ink*, pen: ring of invisibility, necklace **of** adaptation, ring of spelt storing (magic missile (x3), fireball, lightning bolt, cure serious wounds (x2), protection from normal missiles), sandwich*.

*In *deepockets*.

Priest Spells in Memory (5/5/2/1): 1st--cure light wounds (x2), detect evil, penetrate disguise, sanctuary; 2nd--dust devil, enthrall, hold person, speak with animals, silence 15' radius; 3rd--create food and water, death's door; 4th--detect lie.

Spellbook (4/3/3/2/1): 1st--armor, magic missile*, shield, sleep* (x2), spook, unseen servant*; 2nd--deepockets, ESP, invisibility*, know alignment*, levitate; 3rd--clairaudience*, clairvoyance*, fly, monster summoning I, slow*; 4th--charm monster*, minor globe of invulnerability, plant growth, stoneskin, wall of fire*; 5th--animal growth*, hold monster, passwall.

*Indicates memorized spell.

Journey to the Mount

If the PCs travel directly to Mount Antloch, they have no encounters until they reach the stone giant's lair (see "Garth's Pass").

Garth's Pass

Assuming the PCs approach Mount Antloch from the west, they must go through (or, if they can fly, over) Garth's Pass to reach the base of the mountain where the hidden entrance to the Cabal base lies. They can avoid the pass by circling the mountain; otherwise they must deal with its stone giant guardian, Garth.

Garth's lair is in a small hill (less than a quarter mile wide) that stands in the midst of the pass, dividing it into two narrow trails that rejoin on the other side and lead into the foothills of Mount Antloch. The sparsely forested hill has several rocky outcroppings, plus a small cave on its southwest side, about halfway up the 700-foot rise. This cave is where Garth spends most of his time.

The stone giant is somewhat lazy, so he lets his three giant wolverines do most of the work in guarding the pass. One of the animals patrols each side of hill, while the third sleeps in the cave mouth. The three wolverines rotate positions every few hours so that each may rest in turn. The only time all three are together is at sundown, when Garth calls them in for dinner.

On the floor of the pass, the wolverines are visible to scouts, as they are slightly taller than the high grasses. If a wolverine sees a stranger, its first actions are to screech, spray musk, and run for the hill, in that order. This alerts Garth and the other wolverine in the cave with him. Garth begins throwing rocks at the intruders from a camouflaged position against a stony backdrop (50% cover). The two wolverines from the pass regroup on the hillside, then attack the party together.

The third wolverine stands its ground to prevent a diversionary attack unless Garth whistles for it, which he does if he suffers more than 50% of his hit points in damage. In that case, the wolverine from the cave mouth arrives in two rounds to attack the intruders from behind while Garth uncorks his *eversmoking* bottle and flings it toward the hilltop to serve as a signal for the Cabal that dangerous intruders are approaching. Neither Garth nor the wolverines follow the PCs if they retreat to the west; the stone giant considers his duty done if he has managed to signal the Cabal. If the characters go straight up the hill rather than through the split pass, they only have to fight Garth and one wolverine for the first 2 rounds, until the other two can respond to the stone giant's whistle. If they

move through the pass after sundown, they may be able to avoid fighting (and detection) entirely.

Parleying with Garth

If, instead of fighting, the PCs call to the cave and feign friendship, Garth listens to whatever story they tell, then warns them to go back. He has received no instructions to let anyone pass, he says, so no one will. He does, however, offer to uncork his *eversmoking* bottle to let the guards know someone is here; they always send down a squad of soldiers to check the situation when he does that. That would enable the PCs to tell their story to the guards themselves. Barillus has informed Garth in no uncertain terms that Order spies are everywhere, so the stone giant adheres to the letter of his instructions, regardless of what the party says.

Garth has 64 gp in a hide pouch hanging from his belt. In his unkempt lair is a bearskin bed and a week's supply of rotting meat. A wooden chest contains three bags full of coins (total value: 2,000 gp).

Garth, male stone giant: AC 0; MV 12; HD 14+1d3 hit points; hp 59. THACO 7: #AT 1 (fist or club); Dma 1d8 or 2d6+8; SA rock throwing, surprise; SD catching large missiles; SZ L (18' tall); ML champion (16); Int average (10); AL N; XP 7,000.

Special Equipment: *eversmoking* bottle, stone club.

Special Abilities: SA-throw rocks to 300-yard range for 3d10 points of damage, blend in with rocks to surprise enemies on 1-4; SD-catch rocks and similar missiles 90% of the time.

Giant wolverines (3): AC 3; MV 12; HD 6; hp 30 each; THACO 11 (ferocity bonus); #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 2d4/2d4/2d4+2; SZ M (6' long); ML steady (12); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 240 each.

Guards to the Rescue!

If Garth summons help from Mount Antloch by opening his *eversmoking* bottle, one squad (one of those awake but not previously on duty) arrives in 2 turns to investigate. They search carefully for intruders as they approach. The combat mage maintains invisibility until he chooses to join the fight.

Combat Mage, male human M3: AC 9 (Dex bonus); MV 12 (encumbered); hp 7; THACO 20; #AT 1 (darts); Dmg 1d3; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML steady (12); Str 8, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 12; AL LN; XP 175 each.

Spellbook (2/1): 1st--armor, burning hands*, magic missile*, shield, shocking grasp, read magic; 2nd--flaming sphere, invisibility; mirror image, stinking cloud.

*Indicates memorized spell.

Sergeant, male human F3: AC 4 (chain mail + shield); MV 6 (encumbered); hp 15; THACO 18; #AT 1 (heavy crossbow or longsword); Dmg 1d4 or 1d8; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (12); Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8; AL LN; XP 175.

Special Equipment: quarrels (quiver of 10).

Soldiers, male human F1 (8): AC 4 (chain mail + shield); MV 6 (encumbered); hp 5 each; THACO 20; #AT 1 (short sword) or 2 (long-bow); Dmg 1d6 or 1d4; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (12); Str 12, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 7, Cha 8; AL LN; XP 35 each.

Special Equipment: arrows (quiver of 10).

The Mountain Outpost

A few hundred feet up on the western face of Mount Antloch is a wooden fort, barely big enough to accommodate a few dozen men. This serves as the outer fortification for the secret entrance through one of the southern foothills.

The secret entrance to the Crimson Caverns is in full view of the wooden fort, and sentries watch it continuously. The actions of the guards depend on what the PCs do, but typically they just watch to the west. For security against threats from the east, the men in the fort depend on Garth to signal them of incoming danger, as they cannot see over his hill. They are expecting an Order army to come and attack the mountain, so they are not prepared for a small commando force.

In the fort are three squads, each consisting of eight soldiers, one sergeant, and one combat mage. Also stationed here is Arduan, the high elf who commands this outpost. At any time, one squad is combat-ready, another is awake, and the third is asleep. The soldiers who are awake can gird for battle in 11-14 rounds; those who are asleep take 12-19 rounds. Arduan is the only one present who wears red robes (over his elven chain mail), as he is both a fighter and a wizard. He is a good commander, capable of directing his troops to their full advantage.

The PCs must decide how they wish to approach the entrance, which is simply a hole in the mountainside covered by a curtain of brush. The soldiers immediately spray the area with arrow fire if the brush moves. Should this not cause the motion to cease, one squad moves down to investigate personally. Any sounds of combat here alert the guard squadron just inside the entrance (see "Cavern Detail: Area 1"). If the PCs decide to remove the watchers at the fort before exploring the entrance, Arduan and his troops defend themselves as best they can. They do not have a way to warn anyone inside the Crimson Caverns, nor can they get into the complex through any other means.

In combat, Arduan uses his *web* spell first, followed by sleep or *magic missile*. If he has time, he also casts *protection from normal missiles* on himself and uses the *stoneskin* spell from his scroll before wading into combat with his sword. Arduan is a clever, conniving elf convinced of his own greatness, and he accepts orders from no one except Barillus. His belt pouch contains 10 pp, 10 gp, and a *potion of extra-healing*.

The fort has three rooms—a watch room, a barracks, and an office for Arduan. (Arduan has his own chamber within the complex; all the other troops sleep here while assigned to the outer fortification.) On a table in Arduan's office are battle plans detailing Cabal responses to the approach of an army from any direction, including the air. There are no maps of the cavern complex here, and Arduan keeps his spellbooks in his chamber (see "Cavern Detail: area 13").

Once the PCs deal with the defenders and enter the cave, go to "Part 3: The Crimson Caverns."

Arduan, high elf F8/M6: AC 1 bracers *of defense* AC 3, Dex bonus), MV 12; hp 32; THACO 13 (11 with *longsword* +2); #AT 3/2 (*longsword* +2); Dmg 1d8+2; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML elite (13); Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 15; AL NE; XP 1,400.

Special Equipment: *potion of extra-healing*, scroll (*stoneskin*).

Spellbook (4/2/2): 1st-comprehend *languages**, *detect magic*, *magic missile**, *message**, *read magic*, *sleep*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd-continual *light*, *knock*, *know alignment**, *web**, *wizard lock*; 3rd-hold *person**, *protection from normal missiles**.

*Indicates memorized spell.

Combat Mages, male human M3 (3): AC 9 (Dex bonus); MV 12 (unencumbered); hp 7; THACO 20; #AT 1 (darts); Dmg 1d3; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML steady (12); Str 8, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 12; AL LN; XP 175 each.

Spellbook (2/1): 1st-*armor*, *burning hands**, *magic missile**, *shield*, *shocking grasp*, *read magic*; 2nd-*flaming sphere*, *invisibility**, *mirror image*, *stinking cloud*.

*Indicates memorized spell.

Sergeants, male human F3 (3): AC 4 (chain mail + shield); MV 6 (encumbered); hp 15; THACO 18; #AT 1 (heavy crossbow or *longsword*); Dmg 1d4 or 1d8; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (12); Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8; AL LN; XP 175.

Special Equipment: quarrels (quiver of 10).

Soldiers, male human F1 (24): AC 4 (chain mail + shield); MV 6 (encumbered); hp 5 each; THACO 20; #AT 1 (short sword) or 2 (long bow); Dmg 1d6 or 1d4; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (12); Str 12, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 7, Cha 8; AL LN; XP 35 each.

Special Equipment: arrows (quiver of 10).

Part 3: The Crimson Caverns

The Crimson Caverns deep inside Mount Antloch house one of the Red Cabal's most important strongholds. Originally, the Cabal's leaders had intended to establish a permanent gate here to the Elemental Plane of Earth. That plan failed when a miscast spell generated an earthquake that sealed the partially finished gate and its creators beneath tons of rock. The accident did, however, open a series of interconnected caverns higher within the mountain, and the Cabal leadership decided that caves no one else knew existed would provide the perfect hiding place for Miliara's Star, as well as other magical treasures the organization had collected. A small community of wizards kept watch here while pursuing magical research.

When the rivalry with the Celestial Order erupted into open warfare, the Cabal fortified this location with additional mages and soldiers, intending to use it as a launch point for attacks against various Order strongholds. But word of its approximate location leaked to the enemy through spies within the Cabal's infrastructure. Realizing that it was only a matter of time before the enemy discovered the precise location of the caverns, the Cabal instituted a preemptive strike on Fort Hope while arranging to move its greatest treasure—Miliara's Star—to a more secure site. This relocation has not yet occurred, however, and the sapphire remains hidden in Barillus's chamber pending its official removal.

But spies work both ways. When Barillus, leader of the mages at the Crimson Caverns, learned that Archeal—one of the Order's finest tactical minds—would be inspecting the troops at Fort Hope, he decided to eliminate the wizard. His attack was successful, but unbeknownst to him, Archeal's life essence now resides in the gem at the top of his wand, which Barillus is keeping in his conjuring chamber as a prize of war.

Entering the Complex

The positions of the Cabal personnel in the caverns when the characters enter depends on whether the guards in the outer fortification managed to raise the alarm. The Cabal members are not organized to counter a small group penetration of the caverns; they expect an army to come against them. See "Stealthy Approach" if the PCs enter without setting off an alarm. Go to "Full Alert" anytime the PCs do trigger an alarm while they are in the Caverns.

Stealthy Approach

Should the PCs manage to pass the outer fortification without alerting anyone inside, the complex is operating according to its usual schedule. Barillus is in his conjuring chamber (area 24), and his three assistants are in their quarters (area 22). Commander Ferron is in his study (area 10), and Venon is in his chambers (area 19).

Two squads of guards (each consisting of eight men, a combat mage, and a sergeant) are on duty, one on watch in area 1, and the other guarding the prison (area 14). Of the three squads that are awake but not combat-ready, one is in the soldiers' common room (area 19), another is in the barracks (area 9), and the third is in a briefing room (area 16). The other three squads are asleep in the barracks. Archeal (as Old Scat) is locked in the pantry section of the mess hall (area 5).

Full Alert

If at any time the PCs trigger a general alarm (either by allowing the guards at the entrance to strike the watch bell

or through other means), all of the cavern inhabitants begin girding for battle. Barillus stays in area 24, preparing spells to defend Miliara's Star. His three assistants move into the front portion of area 24 to serve as the first line of defense there. Commander Ferron issues orders to the six off-duty squads, then drinks *his potion of invisibility* and moves toward area 1 to locate and assess the threat. The three off-duty squads who were not asleep take 11-14 rounds to ready themselves for battle; the others take 12-19 rounds. They move toward the entrance (area 1) unless Ferron reappears to instruct them otherwise. The on-duty squads, if still alive, hold their positions.

Venon moves into the prison (area 15), where he uses his *hut of disguise* to impersonate Archeal and locks himself in a cell. He feels that allowing the invaders to "rescue" him constitutes his best chance both to survive the battle and to infiltrate the Citadel of the Celestial Order. Venon cares nothing for the lives of the others in this complex and does not participate in its defense.

One of the cook's assistants runs to hide in the pantry, inadvertently releasing Archeal/Old Scat as he does so.

Archeal in the Caverns

Archeal's options are limited while he resides in the *magic jar*. He can sense life essences within his range (150 yards) and determine their nature (positive or negative energy). He can also determine relative power levels within a group of life forces, but he cannot tell precisely who is in his presence, nor can he use any of the spells still in his memory from within the jar. All he can do is select a target among any life forces he senses and try to possess it. If he succeeds, his essence trades places with that of his target, leaving him in control of the body and his victim in the wand. He can also reverse this process at any time so long as he is within range of the wand.

Since Barillus's chamber is the hiding place of Miliara's Star, it is in the most remote area of the complex. Few people pass this way save Barillus, and he is invisible to Archeal because of the *amulet of life protection* and *ring of mind shielding* he wears. Nevertheless, Archeal has succeeded in making two brief excursions into the caverns using "borrowed" bodies. On both occasions, he was able to possess one of a pair of guards on patrol. This allowed him to determine where he was and get some idea of the stronghold's layout, as well as gain confirmation that Fort Hope had indeed fallen. Realizing that these caverns were where the Cabal had stored Miliara's Star, he decided that he might have an opportunity to recapture it if he could determine its precise location, gain some spell components, and plan an escape route. So far, he has not been successful in any of these ventures. Twice Barillus caught someone he supposed was a guard (actually Archeal in a guard's body) ransacking his chambers. In both instances, Archeal immediately returned to the wand, leaving the somewhat confused guard to try to explain his presence there.

In view of these incidents, Barillus has declared his chamber and the hallways around it off-limits, even to guard patrols. Archeal, now sensing even less traffic within his range than before, seized upon the first life force he detected for his next sojourn. To his chagrin, he found himself in the body of a kitchen tomcat contemptuously known about the complex as Old Scat, who had wandered

away from his usual environs in search of rodents. Old Scat, a veteran of many catfights, is an orange tabby with mismatched eyes (one blue and one yellow), a missing ear, and a crooked tail. Archeal soon realized that this body could be quite useful for exploring the halls and worming into small spaces in search of components. Unfortunately, the chef, Bertram by name, found his wayward pet a bit too quickly and imprisoned him in the pantry Archeal, now stuck in this form because he is too far from his wand to switch back, awaits an opportunity to slip out and return to Barillus's quarters.

Unless the PCs find and release him first, Archeal will escape from the pantry when any sort of alarm sounds in the caverns, as a panicked kitchen assistant opens the door intending to hide in there. As soon as he is loose, Archeal attempts to join the PCs by any means he can. If they are not the ones who set him free, he runs toward any sound of battle, then ducks into the shadows to consider his options when he sees a small party engaged with the Cabal troops. Should the opportunity present itself, he attacks a Cabal mage to disrupt a spell, or leaps onto a soldier's head and scratches at his face. (This latter costs the soldier his attacks until he can remove the cat.) When the battle is over, Archeal follows the PCs through the complex if they haven't already adopted him. He attempts to prod them in the direction of area 24 as much as possible—leading them down corridors if they seem inclined to follow him, or yowling and butting his head against their legs if they try to go another direction. If they refuse to go where he indicates, he proceeds toward area 17 anyway, intending to hide near that door until someone opens it and allows him to get to area 18. Once there, he returns to his wand, feeling that he would be safer inside it than in such a weak body.

His goals are to retrieve his wand, find and obtain Miliara's Star, remove the person posing as himself, and escape from the caverns intact.

Archeal/Old Stat: AC 6; MV 9; HD 1/2; hp 3; THACO 20; #AT 2 (claws/bite); Dmg 1d2/1 hp; SA rear claw rake, surprise; SD rarely surprised; SZ T (1' tall); ML elite (14); Int genius (18); AL LN; XP Nil.
Special Abilities: SA-rear claw rake (Dmg 1d2) if both front claws hit, -3 penalty to opponent% surprise rolls; SD-surprised only on 1-2.

The Forces of the Cabal

The wizard called Barillus is in charge of the Cabal forces at the Crimson Caverns. His chief aides are Venon, an evil mage/thief, and Commander Ferron, an officer lured from actual military service by the promise of great riches. Also stationed here are sixty-four men-at-arms, eight sergeants, and several mages of varying experience, plus civilians charged with managing the complex's daily operations (such as Bertram the chef and a few scullery maids). Only Barillus and his assistants wear red robes.

Barillus

The high mage of the Mount Antloch outpost, Barillus is arrogant, authoritarian, and spiteful. Though he is very curious about Archeal's wand, he realizes that trying to use it without knowing its command word would be very risky, and he is not a man who enjoys taking risks. He considers it unwise to tamper with a powerful magical item previously owned by an enemy spellcaster while he's stuck in a backwater outpost. Besides, people are depending on him to lead forces into war. So he keeps the item in his conjuring chamber (area 24), but does not touch it. His spellbooks are in his chambers (area 23).

Barillus has instilled in his troops a great fear of the Order, painting the Cabal members as good mages and the Order wizards as evil ones. He is charismatic enough that most believe him.

Barillus, male human M12: AC3 (cloak of protection +4 Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 44; THACO 17 (14 with dagger +3); #AT 1 (dagger +3); Dmg 1d4+3; SZ M (5'9" tall); ML champion (16); Str 14, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 15; AL LN; XP 3,000.

Special Equipment: amulet of life protection, cloak of protection +4, helm of teleportation, potion of fire breath, ring of mind shielding, rod of rulership (Archeal's wand, for which Barillus does not know the command word), wand of negation (35 charges).

Spellbook (4/4/4/4/1): 1st—alarm, charm person*, detect magic, enlarge, feather fall*, jump, light, magic missile*, read magic, sleep, unseen servant*, write; 2nd—continual light*, deepockets, forget*, invisibility*, knock*, know alignment, levitate, shatter; 3rd—blink, clairaudience, clairvoyance*, dispel magic*, lightning bolt*, protection from evil 10' radius, tongues*, water breathing; 4th—fear*, fire shield, fumble*, minor globe of invulnerability*, wall of ice 5th—cloudkill*, hold monster, sending, telekinesis*, teleport*, transmute rock to mud6th—death spell, disintegrate*.

*Indicates memorized spell.

Venon

Venon is a half-elven mage/thief, and his dark skin shows that the elven strain is drow. Though he happens to be a personal friend of Barillus, Venon is nonetheless in this war only for the money the Cabal pays him. If things look bad, he will not hesitate to save his skin at the expense of others' lives—even those of personal friends. Venon's ability to kill is well known among the troops, and none will cross him. He is a master at creating poisons, and he carries a hand crossbow similar to those used by the drow. He does not like toe-to-toe combat, preferring to attack from invisibility and then disappear.

Venon is intelligent and very quiet, preferring to work in the shadows and let others have the credit (or blame). He takes no special pleasure in killing, but knows he is good at it. He usually wears solid black clothing, sometimes with leather armor of the same hue.

Venon studied Archeal at various battles prior to Fort Hope, and it was he who dealt the killing blow to the wizard there. He knows Archeal's appearance and

manner well enough to impersonate him flawlessly with his hat of disguise.

Venon, half-drow M7/T8: AC2 (bracers of defense AC6, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 39; THACO 17 (16/15 with dagger +1/+2 vs. smaller than man-sized opponents); #AT 1 (hand crossbow or dagger +1/+2 vs. smaller than man-sized opponents), Dmg 1d3 or 1d4+1/1d4+2; SA backstab; SD resistance to sleep and charm; SZ M (5'4" tall); ML average (10); Str 14, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 12; AL NE; XP 3,000.

Special Abilities: SA—backstab for triple damage; SD—resistance (30%) to sleep and charm; thieving skills (PP 70, OL 55, FT 45, MS 50, HS 46, HN 20, CW 90, RL 25); infravision (60'); find concealed doors (1 in 6 passing, 1 in 2 searching) or secret doors (1 in 3 searching).

Special Equipment: hand crossbow (6" range, 1d3 damage, hit requires a save vs. poison at a -2 penalty hat of disguise, Murlynd's spoon, ring of invisibility

Spellbook (4/3/2/1): 1st—alarm*, change self, charm person*, detect magic, friends, read magic, shield*, sleep*; 2nd—blindness, darkness 15' radius*, detect invisibility, glitterdust, knock*, misdirection*; 3rd—blink, nondetection*, slow*, suggestion*; 4th—dimension door, improved invisibility, wizard eye?

*Indicates memorized spell

Commander Ferron

This veteran officer is in charge of the soldiers at Mount Antloch. He takes his general orders from Barillus, but it is he who decides the best way to carry them out. Though he does not like or trust the high mage personally his military training demands that he show his commanding officer proper respect.

Ferron is absolutely loyal to the Cabal, having fully absorbed Barillus's indoctrination against the Order. He is a popular commander, but his troops avoid making him angry, as he can be brutal when enraged. He is also a great tactician, capable of planning brilliant strategies.

Recently, Ferron has had to imprison two of his best men for sneaking around in Barillus's chambers. This concerns him, as does the fact that both protest their innocence vehemently. Ferron has started to wonder if Barillus is keeping something important from him, and he is waiting for an opportunity to have a look around the high mage's chambers himself.

Commander Ferron, male human F8: AC 1 (chain mail +2, shield +1); MV 6 (encumbered); hp 51; THACO 12 (Str bonus; 11/10 with longsword +1/+2 vs. magic-using and enchanted creatures); #AT 3/2 (longsword +1/+2 vs. magic-using and enchanted creatures); Dmg 1d8+4/1d8+5; SZ M (6'1" tall); ML champion (16); Str 18/08 Dex 10, Con 17, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 16; AL LN; XP 975.

Special Equipment: potion of healing, potion of invisibility.

Assistants to Barillus

The high mage has three lower-ranking wizards for assistants. Gareth, Callan, and Boleph hope to work their way up the ladder in the Cabal hierarchy and eventually become high mages themselves. Though not apprentices, they nevertheless follow Barillus's orders without question—primarily because his power exceeds even their combined wizardly might. They do not enjoy this situation, however, finding Barillus a cruel and exacting taskmaster.

Gareth is impetuous and flashy in both personality and choice of magic, Callan is calm and studious, and Boleph is a schemer and a dreamer. All their spellbooks are in area 21, their shared quarters.

Gareth, male human M5: AC 9 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 10; THACO 20; #AT 1 (dagger); Dmg 1d4; SZ M (5'10" tall); ML elite (14); Str 10, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 9; AL LN; XP 270.

Special Equipment: potion of levitation.

*Spellbook: 1st—**affect normal fires, feather fall, magic missile*** (X 2), **read magic**; 2nd—**Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter***, ***Indicates memorized spell.***

Callan, male human M5: AC 10; MV 12; hp 9; THACO 20; #AT 1 (quarterstaff); Dmg 1d6; SZ M (5'10" tall); ML elite (14); Str 9, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 11, Cha 14; AL LN; XP 270.

Special Equipment: scroll (Slow spell).

*Spellbook (2/1): 1st—**detect magic, magic missile***, **read magic, shocking grasp***, **write**; 2nd—**web***, **wizard lock**.*

**Indicates memorized spell.*

Boleph, male human M5: AC 10; MV 12; hp 11; THACO 20 (18 with *dart of the hornets' nest* +2); #AT 1 (darts or *dart of the hornet's nest* +2); 1d3 or 1d3+2; SZ M (5'10" tall); ML elite (14); Str 8, Dex 12, Con 4, Int 15; Wis 7, Cha 13; AL LN; XP 270.

*Spellbook (2/1): 1st—**armor***, **erase, grease***, **read magic**; 2nd—**stinking cloud***, **vocalize**.*

**Indicates memorized spell.*

Combat Mages

Each of the eight squads of soldiers includes a combat mage specially trained to provide magical support in battle. All these mages cast invisibility upon themselves as their first action (prior to entering battle, if possible). They are quartered with their squads and under the control of the appropriate sergeants. These mages know the location (area 24 of both the Wand of Archeal and Miliara's Star.

Combat Mage male human M8 (8): AC 9 (Dex bonus); MV 12 (unencumbered); hp 7 each; THACO 20; #AT 1 (darts); Dmg 1d3; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML steady (12); Str 8, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 12; AL LN; XP 175 each.

*Spellbook (2/1): 1st—**armor, burning hands***, **magic missile***, **shield, shocking grasp, read magic**; 2nd—**flaming sphere, invisibility***, **mirror image, stinking cloud**.*

**Indicates memorized spell.*

Sergeants

The lead fighters of the complex are sergeants only in title; they are all more powerful than average for that rank. Each sergeant commands a squad of eight men plus a combat mage and reports directly to Ferron. The sergeants are careful to follow orders to the letter, for Ferron frequently punishes them for anything their men do wrong. The sergeants are always with their squads.

Sergeant, male human F3 (8): AC 4 (chain mail + shield); MV 6 (encumbered); hp 15 each; THACO 18; #AT 1 (heavy crossbow or longsword); Dmg 1d4 or 1d8; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (12); Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8; AL LN; XP 175 each.

Special Equipment: quarrels (quiver of 10).

Soldiers

The men-at-arms are divided into eight squads of eight men each. At arty time, two squads are combat-ready and on-duty three are off-duty, and three are asleep. Some of the soldiers still wonder why they had to train lizardmen to fight in a battle in which they themselves did not participate. After hearing of the carnage there, however, most are relieved that it fell to them to guard the complex instead. Barillus has told the soldiers that the Order's alchemists routinely use captives for magical experiments or distill their bodies into various potions. Therefore, the troops fight to the death to avoid such a prospect. The soldiers do not know the Wand of Archeal or Miliara's Star by name, but all have heard rumors that Barillus has some powerful magic item sealed in his conjuring chamber.

Soldiers, male human F1(64): AC 4 (chain mail + shield); MV 6 (encumbered); hp 5 each; THACO 20; #AT 1 (short sword) or 2 (longbow); Dmg 1d6 or 1d4; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (12); Str 12, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 7, Cha 8; AL LN; XP 35 each.

Special Equipment: arrows (quiver of 10).

Both Barillus and Commander Ferron can assume command of any troops they find if needed. The sergeants are always in command of their own squads, and each has a 50% chance of rallying any other squad whose sergeant is not present.

Cavern Detail

The entrance to the caverns is a cave in the foothills (area 1) from which both exit passages lead deeper underground. All the caverns are effectively on a single level, but the whole complex slopes gradually downward, so that the northern end of the complex (area 24, Barillus's conjuration chamber) is 70 feet deeper than the entrance.

Torches in wall sconces placed every 15 feet in most corridors provide ample lighting. These caves are natural only in the sense that an explosion in a huge cavern farther underground once relocated some earth downward, creating this complex.

The PCs begin their penetration from a point immediately outside area 1. A large brush curtain masks the cave entrance. If the characters make unnecessary noise, they alert the guard squad inside. The sergeant sends two soldiers to investigate the noise before sounding the alarm. As these troops do not know the guards in the outer fortification are dead, they do not expect an attack.

The numbered areas on the Crimson Caverns Map are defined here. Note that inhabitants can move based on the

PCs' actions, so be sure to track the locations of Archeal/Old Scat and the important NPCs at all times. The NPCs know the layout of the caverns and can use it to their advantage.

1. Entrance. The entryway is a large cave concealed by brush. Inside it waits a full squad consisting of eight men and a sergeant. On the north wall of the entrance chamber is a large gong, which the defenders will strike if a threat merits alerting the entire complex. Next to the gong is a metal mallet, but a mace or the hilt of a sword can serve just as well. The gong is audible as far north as the barracks.

The two exits from this room both lead deeper underground, though a pile of wood partially blocks the westernmost exit. The soldiers are not under orders not to go any farther into that passageway than the woodpile.

2. Blocked Passage. A pile of wood blocks this passageway, which has no lighting of any sort. The floor drops off just beyond the entrance to area 3. Only Barillus comes down this passage, as the pit serves as something of a torture chamber.

3. Pit Trap. This room has no floor save for a 2-foot-wide ledge ringing the walls. Light directed into the huge central hole reveals water far below and a glint of gold from a spot near one wall, about twenty feet down.

Anyone who enters the room without checking the floor carefully must make a Dexterity check to avoid falling into the pit. Twenty feet below the ledge is a 10-foot-deep pool in which live twenty quippers. These piranha-like fish attack anything that falls into their pool. Once one of them scores a hit, every quipper attacks twice per round instead of once. Victims in the water can still use shields to improve their frontal AC scores, though the fish attacking from the rear and flanks have the usual bonuses to their attack rolls. A single lightning bolt might be enough to kill all of the quippers, but that would inflict the spell's full damage (successful saving throw vs. spell for half) to any PCs in the water.

The golden glint in the pit is really a shiny brass bottle on a small ledge 3 feet above the water's surface. Anyone who removes the bottle's brass stopper is instantly replaced by a bewildered woman in chain mail. The bottle reseals itself immediately thereafter, trapping the person who opened it inside.

The woman is Jeannie Brassarm, and she has been trapped for what seemed to her like a few months. She was with a full party in another dungeon when she found and opened the bottle, and she has no idea how it came to be here—wherever "here" is. A few judicious questions from the party can establish that her entry into the bottle occurred four years ago and several hundred miles away.

Jeannie is a capable fighter and strategist, though she is no djinn and cannot grant wishes. Grateful to the PCs for freeing her, she will gladly aid them in any way she can that does not involve re-entering the bottle. She does not know how the item works; she merely opened it and appeared inside. She can describe the contents of the bottle



if so requested. Jeannie is generally a happy person, but she misses her friends and intends to seek them out as soon as she can leave this place.

Jeannie Brassarm, female human F5: AC 2 (chain mail +1, Dex bonus); MY 6 (encumbered); hp 46; THACO 16 (14/12 with *longsword* +1/+3 against regenerators, Str bonus); #AT 1 (*longsword* +1/+3 vs. regenerators); Dmg 1d8+2/1d8+4; SZ M (5'1" tall); ML elite (14); Str 17, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 15; AL N; XP Nil.
Special Equipment: potion of fire resistance.

4. Central Meeting Room. This small chamber serves as a central meeting hall for the guards who patrol the caverns. At present, the room is empty

5. Mess Hall. This large room houses the kitchen and dining area for the complex. There are benches for about one hundred men here, plus a long serving table, chopping blocks, and a huge fireplace with a large stewpot hanging inside. Ceramic plates and cups are stacked in a large cabinet in the corner. The pantry, a separate section secured by a locked door, holds foodstuffs of all sorts, including bags of gram, flour, sugar, preserved meat, and vegetables. (Archeal/Old Scat is locked in here when the party arrives. A plate of meat scraps and a dish of milk serve as his meal.) Bertram, the cook, is also a hunter, so fresh game is usually on the menu. During the day, Bertram is either here or out hunting. His three helpers are here all day.

6. Bertram's Quarters. The cook and his three helpers live in this room. Bertram is a voracious reader, so there are dozens of books piled on his bed. Several spears and bows stand in a corner near two of the four beds.

7. Secret Door. This secret entrance to area 8 is not flush with the stone walls, so it is fairly obvious to anyone looking at it. Elves and half-elves notice it immediately. Barillus has *wizard locked* this stone door to ensure that no one accidentally releases the trolls inside. The door opens inward.

8. Troll Quarters. When preparing these caverns for habitation, Barillus discovered a family of trolls that he decided would make an excellent addition to his force—if tightly controlled. He had his stonemasons (unfortunately not the most skilled of their ilk) fashion a secret stone door, which the high mage then *wizard locked*. Barillus is the only human who enters this room, and they fear his magic. Should anyone else negate the *wizard lock* and open the door, the trolls would leap out and attack instantly, fighting for their freedom. If the PCs gained the advantage in such a fight, they might be able to negotiate with the trolls, as the adult female speaks some Common. The creatures know nothing of the rest of the complex, however, and they are not likely to keep a bargain for long. The child is very curious and tends to get clawed a lot for misbehaving.

Against the southeast wall of the room is a wooden chest that the trolls will defend with their lives. Inside are a set of fancy women's dresses (worth a total of 220 gp), a man's vest with gold trim (worth 40 gp), two gems (worth 100 gp each), 30 gp in assorted coins, plus a *rod of splendor* with 6 charges left. The command word for the rod, "whella," is etched on its side.

Trolls (2): AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6; hp 37 each; THACO 13; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite), Dmg 1d4+4/1d4+4/2d4+4; SA attack multiple opponents, severed parts attack independently; SD regeneration; SZ L (9' tall); ML elite (14); Int low (6); AL CE; XP 1,400 each.

Special Abilities: SA-can direct attacks at up to three opponents simultaneously, severed parts attack independently; SD-regenerate 3 hp/round starting 3 rounds after injury unless burned with fire or acid.

Juvenile Troll: AC 4; MV 12; HD4+4; hp 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite), Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d4; SA attack multiple opponents, severed parts attack independently; SD regeneration; SZ M (5' tall); ML elite (14); Int low (6); AL CE; XP 650.

Special Abilities: SA-can direct attacks at up to three opponents simultaneously, severed parts attack independently; SD-regenerate 2 hp/round starting 3 rounds after injury unless burned with fire or acid.

9. Barracks. These barracks contain beds for one hundred twenty soldiers. Normally, three full squads (including sergeants and combat mages) are asleep here at any given time. (Two of these squads are short one soldier each—these two are currently in the prison in area 5 for ransacking the high mage's chamber.) Another squad is awake, but not fully combat-ready.

Should a general alarm sound, the soldiers prepare for combat under the direction of their sergeants, arriving wherever Ferron directs them in 11-14 rounds if already awake, or 12-19 rounds if roused from sleep.

Commander Ferron is usually in his study (area 10),

New Magical Item: Brass Bottle

The brass bottle is similar to an *efreeti bottle*, save that it must have a resident at all times. Anyone who opens the bottle instantly shrinks to about one-tenth of an inch in height and vanishes, reappearing a moment later inside the item. Whatever creature was already within expands to its normal size and appears on the spot where the opener previously stood. This effect works with any living creature, including monsters. The method of opening is immaterial; using ropes or even *telekinesis* produces the same effect. Only the individual who actually pulls the stopper out is affected, even if he or she did not intend to do so. (Therefore, even a quipper or an unconscious character could enter the bottle if he or she were somehow made the agent of the action.)

Whoever opens the bottle appears inside a huge room that appears to be at least 500 feet across. Dozens of colorful tapestries and curtains cover the brass walls, and plush cushions litter the floor. The ceiling appears to be about 1,000 feet high. A thief could climb the brass walls, but the curtains are not strong enough to support a PC's weight. Nothing here indicates that the victim is inside a bottle, or that he or she is any smaller than normal.

Time passes much more slowly inside the bottle than outside, and the inhabitant need not eat or drink. In addition, the bottle magically heals its inhabitant at the rate of 5 hp per round (outside time).

There is no way to open the bottle from the inside, and even an *enlarge* spell only serves to double the victim's height (to two-tenths of an inch). An outside agent who breaks the bottle releases the victim, but he or she remains small. A *dispel magic* cast from inside or outside the bottle, on the other hand, causes the inhabitant to expand to full size instantly, suffering 1d8 points of damage as the bottle shatters.

which is adjacent to this room. He keeps his door slightly ajar so that he can hear any unusual occurrences in the barracks. (He started this practice after Barillus imprisoned two of his men for ransacking his chamber.)

Most of the sleeping soldiers keep their personal treasures under their beds. This is one of the few rooms where even someone who is not a mining expert can see that the caverns slope slightly downward, since the southern and northern doors do not appear to be exactly level.

If attacked in their chambers without notice, the soldiers defend themselves as best they can. Should this occur while Ferron is nearby, he sends a soldier to warn Barillus and raise the general alarm, if it has not already sounded. Then he drinks his *potion of invisibility* and departs for area 14 to rally the troops guarding the prison. The soldiers fight to the death to avoid the horrible fate that awaits them (according to Barillus) should the Order's forces capture them.

10. Commander Ferron's Study. Commander Ferron is here preparing combat strategies for his troops unless a general alarm has sounded. This room contains a desk, a pair of candle stands, and about twenty books on the art of war stacked neatly on a shelf. One of these books, entitled "The Wizard on the Battlefield," contains a spell-protection from *normal missiles*—that a mage can read as though from a scroll.

On the desk are unfinished defense and attack plans for a battle centering around Mount Antloch. Ferron has devised strategies whereby a small Cabal force can defeat a larger Order army. A thick curtain separates this chamber from area 11.

11. Commander Ferron's Quarters. Ferron has organized this room to highlight the various trophies he has garnered in war. On one wall, an ogre's spear hangs over a minotaur's axe and horns. Under the bed is a locked chest containing 60 gp, a necklace (worth 750 gp), a portrait of Ferron's wife, and a *potion of treasure finding*.

12. Soldiers' Common Room. An off-duty squad relaxes here over a low-stakes card game. The sergeant is winning by a small margin. These soldiers can hear any commotion in areas 4 and 9. They are armed, but not armored.

13. Arduan's Room. This is the chamber of Arduan, commander of the outer fort defense forces. He keeps the door *wizard locked* (as a 6th-level caster). The room is awash in colored tapestries, which are artfully arranged to frame several swords mounted on the walls. Hooded lanterns containing *continual light* globes provide illumination. On the bookshelf over the desk are various books of elven prose, plus Arduan's spellbooks.

14. Prison Entry. A guard squadron is always on duty here to restrict access to the prison cells. Barillus ordered two of their comrades quarantined here, and none of the guards are allowed to speak to them. These soldiers will run to area 4 if an alarm is sounded, and then to area 1. If they hear battle sounds, they will also go to area 1 and, if necessary, sound the gong. The lever to the portcullis is on the north-western wall.

15. Prison. Two of the cells currently house Rallus and Sedge, the two guards who were caught ransacking Barillus's chamber. Neither remembers precisely how he

got into the high mage's chamber, or why he was poking about in the latter's spell components. Rallus, however, does remember seeing a wand matching the description of Archeal's on a table in the high mage's room as they took him away. Both men are furious about their imprisonment and bewildered about the whole incident. They will not fight against their fellow soldiers, but the PCs may be able to persuade them to lead the way to Barillus's chamber in return for their freedom.

If the general alarm has sounded, Venon is also locked inside one of these cells, disguised as Archeal (see "Venon's Plan" for his tactics).

16. Briefing Room. A full squad of soldiers (including a sergeant and a combat mage) is using this chamber to discuss the problem with men-at-arms invading Barillus's quarters. The sergeant is explaining to his men that they should be vigilant against Order magic, for that may have been what turned their fellows to evil. The room's furnishings include a long table with seats for twenty men and an impressive head chair. If the PCs attack these soldiers, the latter beat a fighting retreat through one of the doors, escaping to either the prison or the common room.

17. Sealed Door. Barillus had this metal door covered with magical sigils installed to protect his chamber from any other soldiers who might want to ransack his quarters. He *wizard locked* it for additional security and placed a *permanent illusion* on the small window at eye level. Anyone looking through this window sees a 100-foot square room lined with mummy sarcophagi. Ghouls wander throughout the sparsely lit chamber polishing the mummy cases, retouching their paint, and so forth. Occasionally a ghoul opens a case and talks to the inhabitant for a while. There are only two ways to remove the illusion: by casting *dispel magic* or by shattering the glass. Touching the pane has no effect. The PCs may, of course, try to disbelieve the illusion, but it won't disappear even if they are successful.

18. Trap Point. A wire strung across the corridor at this point rings a bell overhead if anyone trips it. (All the guards know about the trip wire, so friendly soldiers, such as Rallus or Sedge, will warn the PCs about this trap.) If the bell goes off, Barillus and his assistants immediately realize that someone either unwelcome or clumsy (or both) is in the complex. Callan goes from area 21 to the bend in the passage and listens. If he hears anything other than a soldier calling an apology, he warns the other assistants, and all three run to Barillus's chamber for instructions (see area 22).

This spot also represents the farthest range of Archeal's magic jar. If Archeal/Old Scat is with the party at this point, he instantly returns to the wand. Old Scat, once again himself, gives the party a baleful stare and flees down the corridor the way he came. On the next round, Archeal attempts to seize control of a random PC (saving throw allowed). If he fails, he continues making attempts until the PCs pass out of his range at the bend in the corridor.

If Archeal does manage to possess a PC, that character's consciousness replaces Archeal's in the wand. The character can take no actions of any kind until Archeal returns to the *magic jar*. (A trapped PC cannot attempt to possess anyone from a *magic jar*; only the caster can do that.) Archeal's goals now are to get to Barillus's chamber and retrieve his

wand as quickly as possible, and to eliminate the fake Archeal, if he is with the group.

Give a copy of Archeal's character sheet to the player whose character the wizard now occupies. Let the player know that for the time being, he or she is the real, true Archeal and should play accordingly.

19. Venon's Room. Venon's room is spartan; its only furnishings are a bed, a chair, and a workbench for making poisons. The distilling system he uses seems quite complex and arcane, at least to those not of drow descent. On the workbench are three vials of blue sleep poison, plus three darts for a hand crossbow. Four other vials contain other poisons at various stages of completion. None are yet in the lethal category, but anyone drinking something from the

Venon's Plan

Should the PCs find Venon disguised as Archeal in the prison cell or elsewhere that he can instigate this plan, he orders them to release him and escort him back to the Citadel. Should the PCs question him, he makes up whatever responses he thinks will get him out of the complex in their company. For example:

- * "The lizardmen had my body? Obviously it wasn't really me, now was it? That was just a simulacrum I created for the fight in hopes of directing enemy attacks away from me. Unfortunately, the Cabal found the real me as well."
- "They've been keeping me prisoner to use as a bargaining chip should the attack they plan against the Order go against them."
- "I'm afraid I can't be of much help in combat at the moment. All the spells I had memorized vanished from my memory when I lapsed into unconsciousness at the fort. Of course, they confiscated my traveling spellbooks before putting me in here."
- "We must consider the wand a loss of war. Barillus gloated that he had altered it so that it would no longer be safe for me to use. Your mission now must be to return me safely to the Order."

If Archeal/Old Scat is anywhere in the vicinity when the PCs find this fake Archeal, he goes berserk, attacking Venon with teeth and claws until someone stops him. Thereafter, he continues to meow indignantly, nipping at the false wizard's clothing and shoes at any opportunity. After he calms down, he tries to catch the "wizard's" pouch in his teeth and tear it open. If he succeeds, poisoned darts tumble out. (The PCs won't notice the poison on them unless they look closely, however.) If the cat cannot convince the characters to abandon "Archeal" and seek out the wand, he continues toward area 17. He hides near the wall there until someone opens the door, allowing him to get to area 18 and return to his wand.

If the PCs insist on retrieving the wand, Venon reluctantly accompanies them. Should they give up the quest and return with him to the Order Citadel, go to "The Wrong Archeal."

workbench must make a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer one of the following effects (roll 1d4 to determine which):

1. nausea for 1d4 turns
2. 2d6 points of damage
3. 1d8 points of damage, plus loss of ability to speak for 2d4 rounds
4. sleep for 1d10 rounds.

Under the workbench is a metal chest secured with a complex lock (-10% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Anyone trying to open it without first disarming traps (normal chances) must make a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 3d6 points of damage from the poisoned pin trap concealed in the mechanism. The chest contains a book on drow methods of poison distilling, 20 pp, a tiara worth 1,000 gp, *Murlynd's spoon*, Venon's spellbooks, and a diary written in the ancient drow tongue. The key to the chest is in a hollow leg of the bed; using it disarms the trap, which then resets automatically when the chest is closed.

If no general alarm has sounded by the time the PCs reach this point, they find Venon here. (Otherwise, he moves to the prison (area 15) disguised as Archeal. Should the PCs attack him in his quarters, he turns invisible and either backstabs a PC or runs for the barracks, depending upon how formidable the party appears. (He deliberately trips the bell wire himself as he runs down the corridor if he decides to flee.) If there are still able-bodied guards in the barracks, Venon instructs them to pursue the PCs, then follows invisibly to assess the situation. Should the opportunity present itself, he uses his *hat of disguise* to pose as

Archeal, adjusting the plan detailed in "Venon's Plan" as needed to fit the situation. Otherwise, he joins in the fight, using his invisibility and poison to the best advantage and fleeing if the fight turns against him.

Should the PCs find him in his room and offer to parley, Venon pretends to have a change of heart about working for the Cabal. He "lets it slip" that the real Archeal is not dead-Barillus is holding him captive in his conjuring chamber. He offers to accompany the PCs there invisibly to help free Archeal. If they agree to this, he turns invisible and precedes them into area 24, then turns visible, using his hat of *disguise* to impersonate Archeal. If Barillus is there, Venon manages to signal him as to his true identity, and the high mage plays along with the ruse. If the PCs "rescue" Venon, he continues with his plan to use them to infiltrate the Celestial Order Citadel (see "Venon's Plan").

20. The Magicians' Study. Approximately one hundred books are neatly stacked on a long bookshelf that occupies one wall of this room. A long table with reading candles and a few chairs complete the furnishings. None of the tomes are spellbooks; all are simply treatises on magic written by various Cabal members.

21. The Assistants' Chamber. All three of Barillus's assistant mages live here. Hanging curtains divide the chamber into three parts, each of which reflects the personality of its inhabitant. Each assistant's area contains a bed, a nightstand, and a small bookshelf on which the mage keeps his spellbooks.

Gareth has decorated his area in bright colors. The mounted head of a gnomish occupies a prominent position on



the wall, and the bookshelf contains a book on magical combat as well as Gareth's spellbooks. In a foot locker near the bed is a thick leather bag containing 15 gp, 10 sp, and a ring worth 75 gp.

The largest item in Callan's portion of the chamber is a rolltop desk littered with scrolls. The writings on them are not spells, but Callan has been trying to decipher and copy them nonetheless. Callan has *wizard locked* the desk drawer, which contains some writing utensils and Callan's treasure: 30 gp, 15 sp, a gem worth 50 gp, and three paper-wrapped feathers from a pegasus.

Boleph's area is sparsely decorated, but several books are piled in a corner. Most of these tomes are flights of fancy, but his spellbooks are among them. Wedged under his bed is a locked iron chest which is trapped with a poisoned dart. The dart causes 1d2 points of damage and forces a saving throw vs. poison. Failure indicates that the victim suffers an additional 2d6 points of damage. Inside the chest are 37 gp, 2 pp, a worthless fake diamond, and a wavy-bladed dagger.

Gareth, Callan, and Boleph are all here unless the bell in area 18 has sounded or a general alarm has been raised. If attacked without warning in their chambers, the assistants first shout for help, hoping Barillus will hear. He does, but does not respond—instead he prepares to make a stand in his own chambers, realizing that intruders are probably here for the wand, the star, or both. Meanwhile, the assistants defend themselves as follows, unless PC actions make other options more appropriate.

Round One: Callan casts a *web* over the doorway. Gareth casts *magic missile*, preferably at a wizard. Boleph throws his darts.

Round Two: Callan uses the slow spell from his scroll. Gareth drinks his *potion of levitation*. Boleph casts his *armor* spell.

The assistants defend themselves with their remaining spells as best they can, but they are perfectly willing to surrender if they are in serious danger.

22. Barillus's Quarters. The high mage's three assistants run to this room if an alarm sounds. Barillus tells them to defend the Cabal from the "forces of Archeal," then goes into the chamber with the wand to protect it.

Assuming the assistants have at least 2 rounds to prepare for the PCs arrival, the three take the following actions:

- Gareth drinks his *potion of levitation* (duration: 6 turns) and assumes a position by the left wall, within sight range of the door.
- Callan stands behind an overturned table, which provides him 75% cover, plus a direct line of sight to the door.
- Boleph casts *armor* on himself and a *grease* spell on the floor just inside the door, then takes a position next to the lever on the north wall.

Normal initiative applies when the PCs open the door. The assistant mages plan the following actions for the first 2 rounds of combat. (They will, of course, adjust their actions to fit the circumstances.)

Round One: As soon as the PCs open the door, Boleph immediately casts *stinking cloud* on the area around it. Callan casts *web* to secure any PCs in the doorway to its

frame, and Gareth casts *magic missile* at the lead character. Any character caught in the *stinking cloud* suffers a 4 penalty on his or her saving throw vs. the *web*.

Round Two: Boleph uses the lever to release the three carnivorous apes from area 23; these creatures attack only the PCs. Gareth casts his second *magic missile* spell, and Callan reads a *slow* spell from his scroll.

Any PCs who escape the *web* must cope with the *grease*. Each enemy wizard still has a magical attack and a physical weapon with which to continue the fight. The assistants know that Barillus has *wizard locked* the door to the conjuring chamber, so he won't be helping them. Note that if Venon is with the group and it looks like the assistant mages have a chance of winning, he may decide to turn on the party here, becoming invisible and backstabbing a convenient PC.

If the PCs have already defeated the assistants elsewhere and no alarm has sounded, Barillus himself is here when they arrive. He casts *lightning bolt* at party, then teleports (via his *helm*) into the conjuring chamber (area 24).

This room is Barillus's personal quarters. The furnishings consist of a large feather bed, a desk, a lantern lamp, a large mirror, a wardrobe, and a bookshelf. Inside the desk are manuscripts detailing various Cabal plans, including the taking of Fort Hope and the training of the lizardmen. There is also a sketch of the Wand of Archeal with these papers, but the page bears no notations about where it is or what it does. Beside the desk is an ivory chest filled with components for all the spells in the high mage's spellbook. The wardrobe contains several red robes, various dress clothes, and several pairs of boots. Barillus keeps his *helm of teleportation* in the wardrobe when he sleeps. The bookshelf contains Barillus's diaries and spellbooks.

23. Ape Lair. Three carnivorous apes live behind the portcullis that closes off this room from the complex. Barillus and his assistants keep them well fed, so the apes know and respect them. They are quite willing to kill anybody else they can grab, however. The room contains straw beds and a jungle gym, but no treasure.

Carnivorous apes (3): AC 6; MV 12, in trees 9; HD 5; hp 28 each; THACO 15; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8; SA surprise; SZ L (6' tall); ML steady (12); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 175 each.

Special Abilities: SA-bonus of +2 to surprise rolls.

24. Barillus's Conjuring Chamber. Barillus keeps the metal door to the conjuring chamber *wizard locked*. The room's floor is a mosaic in the pattern of a unicorn's head. In the center is a small table upon which rests the Wand of Archeal. Below this table is a 2-foot-square trapdoor in the floor (treat as a secret door for detection purposes because of the remarkable fit with the rest of the floor's design), which Barillus has also *wizard locked*. In a small, lead-lined, cubic chamber (2 feet per side) beneath the trapdoor is Miliara's Star—or what is left of it. The sapphire has lost about one-third of its mass, which makes it look as though someone has cleaved off a portion of it. It radiates enchantment magic.

As soon as any alarm sounds, Barillus tries to get to this chamber. Thereafter, he takes as many of the following actions (in order) as he can before the PCs arrive:

1. Cast *wall of ice* on the other side of the doorway, then close the door.
2. Cast *clairvoyance*, so that he can monitor the PCs' movements.

3. Drink his potion of fire breath.
4. Cast minor *globe of invulnerability* on himself.

If the PCs break or melt a hole in the ice, Barillus opens the door and casts *hold monster* on up to four of the PCs. If he can, he then casts *transmute rock to mud* on the ceiling, thereby dumping 22 cubic yards of mud on the PCs. (This inflicts 4d4 points of damage on anyone caught underneath; successful Dexterity checks to avoid). Thereafter, Barillus attacks to best effect with his spells and his *wand of negation*. Whenever the PCs are close to getting through the doorway, the high mage casts a *lightning bolt* at what remains of the *wall of ice*. Anyone in front of it when it shatters suffers 2d6 points of damage from the shrapnel, as well as the damage from the *lightning bolt*. (Victims who make successful saving throws vs. spells suffer only half damage.) Once the wall is gone, Barillus may, depending upon the circumstances:

- employ his *fire breath* (from the potion)
- cast *invisibility* to protect himself
- close the door and force the PCs to deal with the *wizard lock* while he prepares additional spells.

If the PCs actually get close to Barillus, he grabs the wand (and Miliara's Star, if possible) and uses his *helm of teleportation* to go to another Red Cabal fortress. He will not abandon the mountain except in the absolute direst of circumstances, however.

Archeal stands an excellent chance of preventing Barillus from escaping with his wand. If he can remove or disable the high mage's *amulet of life protection* (his *geas* spell might be helpful here), or convince the PCs to do so, he returns to his *magic jar* in the wand and immediately tries to possess Barillus. (The high mage registers as a more powerful life form than the party members do when Archeal senses them from inside the *jar*. So does Venon—therefore if the latter is present, Archeal tries for either of them.)

If Archeal gains control of Barillus's body, he immediately stops fighting the party and surrenders. If they continue attacking, he returns to the *jar* and tries to possess a PC instead. Thereafter, he aids them in defeating Barillus, but tries to ensure that they capture the high mage alive. If the PCs accept his surrender, he explains that he is Archeal, complying with whatever requests the PCs make to verify that to their satisfaction. If Archeal gains control of Venon's body, he fights alongside the party to defeat Barillus, but again tries to ensure that the group takes the high mage alive. Go to "Getting Out" once the characters have defeated Barillus.

Getting Out

If there is a Cabal force coming to attack the PCs, Archeal grabs his wand and uses it to hold off the approaching soldiers while the PCs search Barillus's conjuring chamber and quarters for Miliara's Star, Barillus's spellbooks, and any spell components Archeal still needs. (He particularly wants the copper coils for his *sending* spell.) When the PCs have the components, he asks them to take over holding off the enemy forces while he sends a message to Ezakion.

Ezakion teleports into the conjuring chamber one round later. He of course does not recognize Archeal in his current form, so some explanation is needed to gain his help.

Thereafter, he congratulates the PCs on a job well done.

If there is still danger, he tells them to gather together, then he and Archeal teleport them all to the Celestial Order Citadel. Otherwise, he asks for a quick report, then takes Miliara's Star and as many party members as possible back to the Citadel, telling Archeal to follow with the other PCs as soon as the location is cleared and secured.

What To Do With Archeal

Archeal has no intention of keeping the body of any PC he has possessed, but he would like to discuss options before returning to his *jar*. If the characters have arranged for the return of his body to the Citadel, he assumes (correctly) that priests there can restore it to working order via *neutralize poison* and *raise dead*. This should allow him to re-enter it when he gets back. He would prefer to retain this body until he has his own back, but he will agree to return the PC's body as soon as the party is safely back inside the Citadel if so requested. The wizard is also agreeable to borrowing the body of a Cabal soldier until he returns to the Citadel, if the PCs have left any alive.

If the PCs left Archeal's body in the lizardmen's camp, the mage asks that they go and retrieve it. He is willing to accompany them and provide any magical support they need. The lizardmen are happy to comply with their request if the PCs killed Aargaz. If they left the lizard king alive, he has since eaten Archeal's body in that case, Archeal asks that the party accompany him back to the Citadel. There, he arranges with his peers to borrow a body from one of them periodically, so that he can participate in planning. He does no more traveling outside the Citadel until a permanent, willing host can be found for his life force.

The Wrong Archeal

If the PCs escort Venon back to Kayleigh's Folly as Archeal, Jamal reports Archeal's safe return to his superiors. Ezakion teleports into Jamal's room at the Drowned Muskrat to retrieve his friend. Unless the PCs report suspicious behavior, Ezakion takes Venon back to the Citadel, where his infiltration plan proceeds unchecked. Within two weeks, the faerie crown of Gambriillon disappears from the Citadel, which falls to Cabal forces one week thereafter.

If the characters mention anything about "Archeal" that would arouse Ezakion's suspicions, the elder mage still returns with him to the Citadel, but orders surreptitious watch kept over him. Within the week, the Order mages discover Venon's true identity and eliminate him.

The Star Crown

If the PCs aid the Order in retrieving Miliara's Star, the Citadel mages spend an additional month working to create the artifact, which does indeed give form to the user's thoughts. It has a flaw, however; the user can neither remove it nor control which thoughts assume form—they all do. This flaw eventually results in the fall of the Citadel and the loss of the Star Crown.

The characters can, if desired, suggest to their employers that it would be best to heal the schism between the two factions before assembling the Crown. The Order wizards resist this notion strongly at first, but can be convinced. If mages from both groups work together on the Star Crown, the finished product is still unremovable, but the user can select which thoughts assume physical form.

Character Sheet: Archeal

Name: Archeal **Class:** Wizard
Race: Human **Gender:** Male
Level: 15 **Alignment:** LN

Ability Scores

Strength (as PC)
Dexterity (as PC)
Constitution (as PC)
Intelligence 18
Wisdom 17
Charisma 16

Armor: (as PC)
Armor Class: (as PC)
Move: (as PC)
Hit Points: (as PC)
THACO: 16

Weapons: (as PC)

*Spells Memorized** (5/5/5/5/2/1): 1st-*detect magic***, *light***, *magic missile*** (x2), *protection from evil*; 2nd-*bind*, *detect evil***, *levitate*; 3rd-*clairvoyance*, *phantasmal force*; 4th-*charm monster***, *polymorph self***, *remove curse***; 5th-*cone of cold*, *hold monster*, *passwall*, *sending*, *teleport***; 6th-*geas***, *project image*; 7th-*teleport without error***.

*Indicates spells remaining in your memory at the time you entered your *magic jar*.

**Indicates spells requiring no material components.

You are a 15th-level wizard who has spent considerable time languishing in a *magic jar* of your own creation since your body's death at the Battle of Fort Hope. Knowing the perils of war, you arranged this transfer some time ago by casting a *contingency* spell in conjunction with a *magic jar*. The vessel you chose to house your life force was the 40-karat diamond at the tip of your *own* wand. (It's really a *rod of rulership*, but you've always referred to it as your wand, and now everyone else does too.)

Since your death, you have attempted possession whenever you sensed life forces within the range of your spell. This is the fourth successful possession you have managed. This body apparently belongs to one of a small party of invaders to this complex, probably sent by your compatriots in the Celestial Order to rescue you.

The first two people you possessed were men-at-arms. You used them to explore the complex in which you found yourself, discovering it to be the Red Cabal's hidden base within Mount Antloch. You might have been able to escape then, but the other guards with you were already suspicious of your sudden lapses of memory and changed behavior. Besides, escape would have meant abandoning your wand and potentially being stuck in a body not your own for the rest of your life. Not only would this have been unpleasant for you, but trapping another person inside a *magic jar* for life while using his or her body is surely an evil act. In addition, you had no spellbooks or spell components, and you never have been good with a sword, so defending yourself on a long, cross-country trek would have been problematical. Therefore, you decided to make your way to the chambers of the high mage in charge of this complex-Barillus by name--and ransack his chambers for your wand, any spell components you could use, his spellbooks, and perhaps even Miliaria's Star, which the Order believes is in this complex.



You did find your wand on a table in his conjuring chamber, but before you could do much more than pick it up, he caught you there--both times. In each case you quickly transferred back into your wand, restoring the guard's mind to his own body in the process. You are sure the bewildered guards got some punishment they didn't deserve, but such are the ways of war.

Then a long time went by before you sensed another life essence. You easily took possession of that body, only to discover that it was a tomcat--obviously the veteran of many battles himself. This body might have been ideal for sneaking around, but almost immediately the cat's owner (the cook) found you and imprisoned you in the pantry, far out of range of your *jar*. You finally escaped and returned to it when the door to the hidden corridor leading to the high mage's chambers was opened.

You have seen someone in this complex posing as you--someone who has managed to duplicate your human appearance almost exactly. Obviously, he is an imposter whom you will have to eliminate at the earliest opportunity. That, plus retrieving your wand and the Star, if it's here, then escaping with them, are presently your highest priorities. Perhaps this group can help you accomplish those things. You must now decide whether to tell them who you are, and how best you can all accomplish your mission and escape.

You still have only the spells in your memory; fortunately some do not require components. Barillus's sleeping quarters have some spell components, as do the quarters of his three assistant mages just down the corridor. Their spellbooks are also in their chambers. You've noticed that Barillus wears some sort of amulet. This is probably what has kept you from being able to sense and seize his body when he's been in the chamber with the wand.

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WAND OF ARCHEAL

Mike Selinker and Penny Williams

Based on an original tournament idea by Robert Kindel



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